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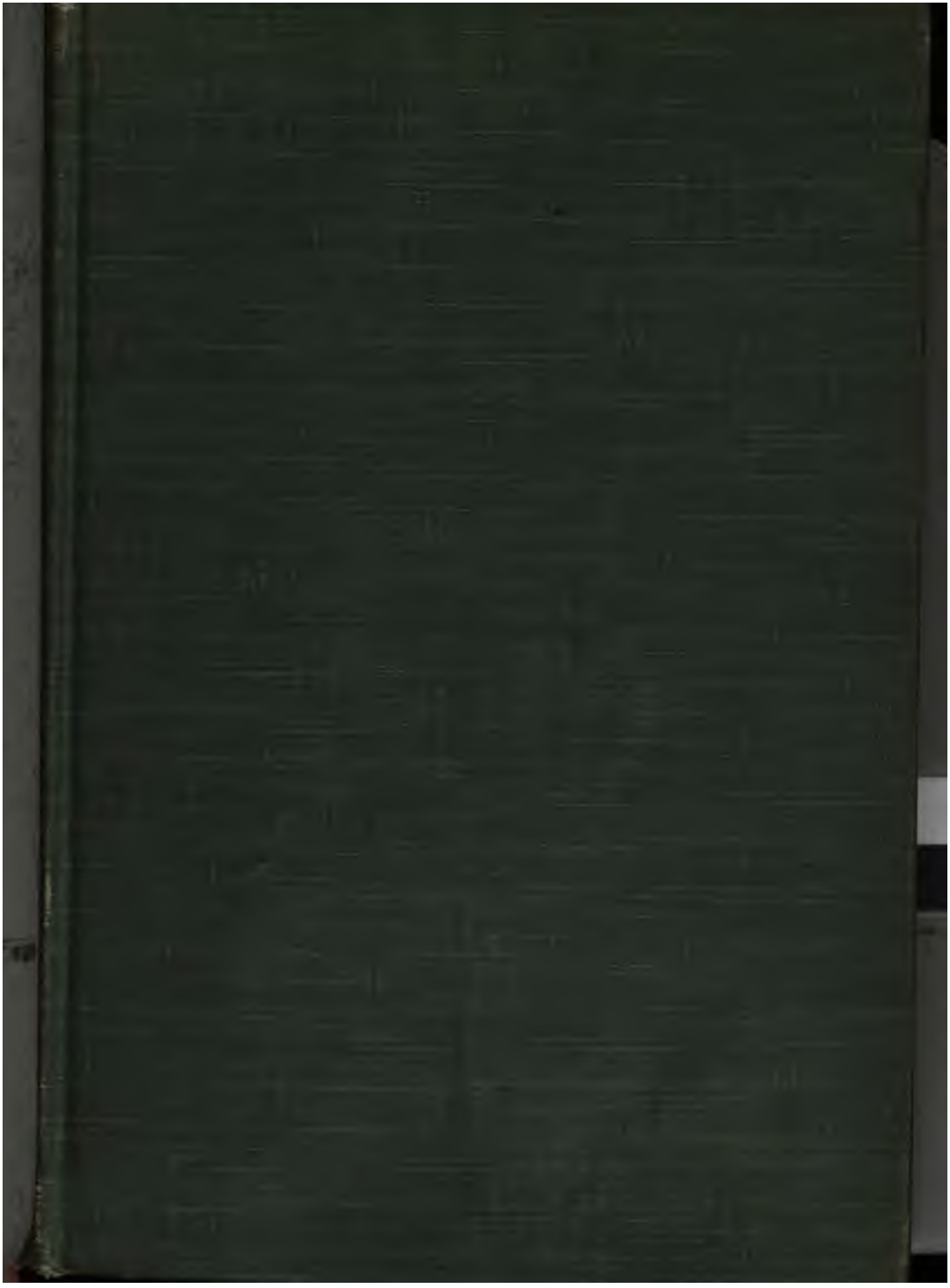

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TRANSLATIONS FROM LUCIAN

TRANSLATIONS FROM LUCIAN

BY

AUGUSTA M. CAMPBELL DAVIDSON

M.A. EDIN.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1902

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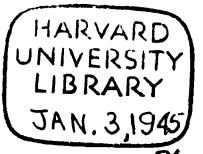

Miss Sally Fairchild

PREFATORY NOTE

THERE can be little doubt that, whatever the cause, Lucian is a writer who has fallen at the present day almost wholly out of general reading. No great number of his dialogues and pamphlets has met in recent times with a translator, and it seems probable that to the majority of English readers he is little more than a name.

It is in the belief that this general neglect is wholly undeserved that I have thought it worth while to add a few more to the pieces translated in this country of late years, with a view to bringing under the notice of the English reader some specimens of Lucian's work in various kinds which may afford some further glimpses of the picture he has left us of the social and intellectual life of his times—a picture wherein the touch of the painter, no less than the subject painted, goes to prove the entire justice with which this writer of eighteen centuries ago has been called 'the first of the moderns.'

Of the seven pieces now translated, different as they are in style and subject-matter, each deals in a fashion of its own with one of the three subjects

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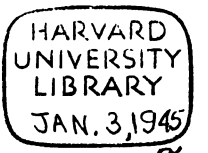

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of religion, philosophy, and literature; with the character of their professors and their position in the social system of the time, or with the attitude towards these subjects of an age of decadence—of reaction on the one hand and of fantastic innovation on the other; of unsparing scepticism matched with rank superstition; of artificial enthusiasms and fashionable crazes.

The text followed in these translations is that of Jacobitz in the Teubner series (Leipsic, 1896). No alteration has been made beyond a few necessary omissions and modifications.

LONDON, *January* 1902.

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THE SALE OF PHILOSOPHERS

ZEUS. Put the benches in order, you there, and get the place ready for the customers! You, bring in the goods and set them in a row; but brush them up a little first to make them look their best, and attract as many buyers as possible. Do you, Hermes, put up the lots, and bid purchasers welcome to the saleroom. We beg to announce a sale of philosophic characters of every class and variously assorted principles. Customers finding it inconvenient to pay cash down may give security for the amount of their purchase, and settle next year.

HERMES. They are coming in in crowds. We had better begin at once, so as not to keep them waiting.

ZEUS. By all means let us do so.

HERM. Whom do you want brought out first?

ZEUS. That long-haired fellow—the Ionian; he looks rather an imposing personage.

HERM. You there, Pythagoras, come down and let the gentlemen have a look at you. Gentlemen, the article I offer you is one of the best and most high-class character. Who buys? Who wants to soar above mere humanity? Who wants to understand the harmony of the universe, and live again after death?

CUSTOMER. He is rather grand to look at, certainly. But what exactly is his specialty?

HERM. Why, arithmetic, astronomy, necromancy, geometry, music, magic—in short, I am offering you a finished wizard.

CUST. May I ask him a few questions?

HERM. Pray do, by all means.

CUST. What is your country?

PYTHAGORAS. Samos.

CUST. Where were you educated?

PYTH. In Egypt, by the wise men of the place.

CUST. Come now, suppose I buy you, what will you teach me?

PYTH. I shall not teach you anything: I shall only awaken your memory.

CUST. How will you do that?

PYTH. By first clearing out your mind, and washing away all its defilements.

CUST. Well, imagine me already purified. Now, what is your process for awaking memory?

PYTH. The first thing is prolonged quiet and silence; you must never say a word for five whole years.

CUST. Why, my good man, you had better go and teach the deaf and dumb—for my part, I like to talk, not to be a graven image. However, what comes after the five years' silence?

PYTH. You shall be put through a course of music and geometry.

CUST. A charming idea truly! So I must first be a fiddler before I can be a philosopher!

PYTH. Next after that you shall be taught how to count.

CUST. I know how to do that now.

PYTH. How do you do it, then?

CUST. One, two, three, four.

PYTH. There! do you see? What you think four is really

ten, and the perfect triangle and the oath of our brotherhood.

CUST. Now, by this most mighty oath of the number Four, I swear I never heard words more wonderful or more divine.

PYTH. Next, my good sir, you shall learn about the elements—earth, air, water, and fire—what their forces and their form and motion are.

CUST. What! do you mean that fire and water are possessed of form?

PYTH. Most distinctly they are. How could what has neither shape nor form have motion? Then, when you have mastered all this, you will learn that what is called God really consists in Number, and Mind, and Harmony.

CUST. This is truly wonderful!

PYTH. Then, in addition to what I have mentioned, you shall come to understand that you yourself, who think you are a single individual, are one person in appearance and another in reality.

CUST. What! do you actually mean to say that I am somebody else, and not the person who is talking to you now?

PYTH. Yes, just at the present moment you are that person; but at some former time you used to appear in another body, and under another name, and, in course of time, you will change into somebody else again.

CUST. Do you mean to say that I shall become immortal by changing into other forms? However, we have had enough about that. How about diet now? What is your system in that respect?

PYTH. I eat the flesh of no living creature; but I admit everything else, except beans.

CUST. Why is that? Do you dislike beans?

PYTH. Not at all; but they are sacred and of a marvellous nature, for they are full of the principle of life. Besides, and this is the most important reason, the law of Athens enjoins that the magistrates there shall be elected by a ballot of beans.

CUST. Well, all you have said is excellent and worthy of the philosophic character. But now, strip, please, for I wish to see you naked. Good gracious! why, he has got a golden thigh! Surely he must be some god, and not a mortal at all. I must certainly buy him. How much do you ask for him?

HERM. Ten minae.

CUST. I will take him at that.

ZEUS. Write down the purchaser's name and address.

HERM. It seems he is from Italy—one of those Greeks who live at Croton, or Tarentum, or some of the colonies thereabouts. He is not the sole purchaser, it would appear, but some three hundred others are partners in the transaction.

ZEUS. Well, let them take him. Now let us have another.

HERM. Shall we put up that unwashed-looking fellow from Pontus next?

ZEUS. Yes, he 'll do.

HERM. You there—the bare-armed fellow with the wallet —come and walk round the saleroom. A fine manly character this, gentlemen, grand and noble and a true freeman. Who buys?

CUST. How now, salesman, what 's this? Selling a freeman, are you?

HRM. Oh, by all means.

CUST. Are you not afraid he may bring an action for kidnapping against you, and summon you before the Areopagos?

HERM. Oh, being sold is nothing to him: he thinks himself free under all circumstances whatsoever.

CUST. But what possible use could one make of such a dirty, wretched-looking creature, unless, indeed, one should set him to digging, or make a water-carrier of him?

HERM. That is not all he is fit for; if you were to make a doorkeeper of him, for instance, you would find him more trustworthy than any dog; indeed, Dog is the name he actually goes by.

CUST. Where does he come from? What does he profess to be his way of life?

HERM. Ask him yourself—that will be the most satisfactory thing to do.

CUST. But I don't like his surly hang-dog look. I 'm afraid he may growl at me if I go near him; indeed, upon my word, he looks as though he might bite too. Don't you see how he is fidgeting with that stick of his, and how he scowls, and what angry threatening looks he casts at us from under his brows?

HERM. Don't be afraid; he 's quite tame.

CUST. Well, in the first place, my good man, what country do you belong to?

DIOGENES. Every country.

CUST. What do you mean by that?

DIO. I mean I am a citizen of the universe.

CUST. Are you a follower of any master?

DIO. Yes, of Heracles.

CUST. Then why don't you also wear the lion's skin? for I see you have a club like his.

DIO. Here it is—my threadbare cloak is my lion's skin. Like Heracles, I spend my life in warfare; but it is against pleasures that I contend, and that not at any

one's command, but of my own free will. The task to which I have devoted myself is the thorough cleansing of human life.

CUST. An excellent object, certainly. But what is your particular branch of knowledge? What is the art which you profess?

DIO. I am the liberator of mankind, and the healer of the passions. In a word, I profess myself the apostle of truth and plain speaking.

CUST. Well, apostle, if I buy you, what will be your method of teaching me?

DIO. First, I shall take you and strip off your habits of luxury, and confine you straitly to poverty, and put a ragged cloak upon you. Then I shall force you to toil and labour, to sleep on the ground, to drink nothing but water, and eat anything that comes to hand; and if you have any money, you shall throw it into the sea at my bidding. You must care nothing for wife, or children, or country; all such things must be empty vanity in your eyes; you shall leave your father's house, and live in some tomb or deserted tower, or even, perhaps, in a tub. Your wallet shall be full of lupines, and parchments covered with writing on both sides. In this condition you shall declare that you live in more happiness and enjoyment than any Eastern potentate; and if any one should scourge or torture you, you are not to look on this as anything painful or distressing.

CUST. What do you mean?—not feel pain if I am beaten! My good man, do you think I have a shell like a tortoise or a lobster?

DIO. You can alter that sentiment of Euripides, you know, and make it your own.

CUST. What sentiment?

DIO. You can say, 'My mind is pained—my tongue shall own it not.' But the most necessary qualifications are these: you must be headstrong and insolent, and indulge in abuse of everybody indiscriminately—kings and commons alike; in this way you will make yourself conspicuous, and be looked on as a fine manly character. Your way of speaking must be uncouth, and your voice discordant and disagreeable like a dog's; your face must look harsh and rigid, and your gait must match it; in short, your whole manner and appearance must be brutelike and boorish. As for modesty, or decency, or moderation—away with anything of the sort—such a thing as a blush you must utterly banish from your face. Then you must seek out the most frequented places, and when you are there, make a point of being solitary and unsociable; you must let neither friend nor stranger approach you, for that sort of thing is the ruin of your dominion. Then you must boldly do in public what most people would be ashamed to do in private; your love affairs, again, must be of the most ridiculous character; and in the end you may die, if you like, by choking yourself with a raw octopus or a squid. This is the life of happiness to which I shall introduce you.

CUST. Be off with you! this system of yours is absolutely revolting and unnatural.

DIO. All the same, it is an easy one, my good man, and anybody can easily shine in it. You see, you don't need culture, or learning, or rubbish of that sort; so it is a fine short cut to distinction. Even supposing you are absolutely without education—a tanner, say, or a salt-fish huckster, or a carpenter, or a money-changer—there is nothing to prevent your gaining fame and admiration, if

only you have shamelessness and brazen impudence, and a happy knack of indiscriminate abuse.

CUST. Well, I'm afraid I can make no use of you as an instructor. But perhaps some day you would do as a boatman or an under-gardener; and if they will sell you for two obols, I will give that for you, but no more.

HERM. Pray take him on any terms you like. We are quite glad to get rid of him; he is so troublesome, roaring and shouting and insulting everybody all round, and calling us all names.

ZEUS. Now call up the next. Let us have the Cyrenean there—the fellow with the purple cloak and the garland.

HERM. Now, gentlemen, pray give me your attention. This is a most expensive and valuable article, and only persons of large means need think of buying. I offer you Joy and Pleasure—nothing less. Who buys luxury and delicate living? What offers for my most dainty of sages?

CUST. Well, come here and tell me what your attainments are. I will buy you if you seem likely to be of any use.

HERM. Don't bother him, my dear sir, nor ask him questions. He has had a drop too much, as you see, and can't answer you, for his tongue is not quite under control.

CUST. And who in his senses, do you think, would buy such a spoilt and worthless scamp as that? Why, he positively reeks of perfumes, and can't even walk straight. But tell me yourself, Hermes, if you can, what are his points, and whether he has any accomplishments?

HERM. Well, he is uncommonly pleasant in society, a first-rate boon companion, and can sing and dance with the flute girls—a perfect treasure, in short, to any master of

jovial tastes and not too strict in his life. Then, besides, he is a great connoisseur in the matter of eating, and a first-rate cook himself; in a word, he is a perfect master of the whole art of good living. He was brought up at Athens, and was in the service of the tyrants of Sicily, who had the highest opinion of him. To put it shortly, his system consists in despising everything, making use of everything, and getting pleasure out of everything.

CUST. Well, you had better go and look out for some other purchaser among these wealthy people here. I am not the person to invest in so gay a character.

HERM. I do believe, Zeus, that he will remain on our hands —he's perfectly unsaleable.

ZEUS. Make him stand down and put up another—or, rather, put up these two together—the fellow from Abdera, who is always laughing, and the Ephesian, who is everlastingly crying. I want them sold as a pair.

HERM. Come forward there, you two. Gentlemen, here is a pair of the finest characters possible; we offer you the two wisest of our whole stock.

CUST. Heavens! what a contrast! One never stops laughing, and the other seems to be in mourning for somebody, for he is quite dissolved in tears. How now, you there, what are you laughing at?

DEMOCRITUS. Can you ask? Why, because all your doings seem to me intensely ridiculous, and you yourselves no less so.

CUST. What! do you mean to say you are laughing at us all, and hold all human concerns in contempt?

DEM. Exactly. For, you see, there is nothing in the least real or serious in any of them—all things are vain and empty—the mere blind concourse of atoms in infinite vacuity.

CUST. Not a bit of it; you are an atom of infinite vacuity yourself. Confound your impudence; can't you stop laughing? But tell me, my poor fellow, for I had rather talk to you than to this mountebank, why do you weep so incessantly?

HERACLITUS. I weep because to me it seems that all things in the life of man are pitiable, and call for tears, and there is nothing among mankind that is not doomed to woe; wherefore I pity them and lament their lot. The present ills, indeed, I count not so heavy; it is for the awful future that I mourn—I mean the final conflagration and the collapse of the universe. All this I bewail, and this, too, that there is nothing abiding, but all things are confounded together, as it were, in one cup of woe—pleasure and misery, knowledge and ignorance, great and small, high and low, each is the same as the other, changing and interchanging with ceaseless flux in the sport of the universe.

CUST. What, then, is the universe?

HERA. 'Tis a child at his game, playing at draughts, quarrelling.

CUST. What, then, are men?

HERA. Mortal gods.

CUST. What are the gods?

HERA. Immortal men.

CUST. Are you propounding riddles, my good man, and setting us puzzles to solve? You speak exactly like the Delphic oracle; one is not a bit the wiser for all you say.

HERA. Very likely not. I trouble myself about you not at all.

CUST. Then no one in his senses will buy you.

HERA. Woe to you all, man and boy, buyers alike and those who do not buy!

CUST. This sort of thing is next door to melancholy madness. I shall not buy either the one or the other of them.

HERM. These two have not sold either.

ZEUS. Well, put up another.

HERM. Shall we have the chattering Athenian now?

ZEUS. By all means.

HERM. Come here, you. The lot we now offer you, gentlemen, is a character of high moral tone and great intelligence. What offers for the most exalted of philosophers?

CUST. Tell me, what is your specialty?

SOCRATES. I am very fond of children, and also a great authority on the subject of love-making.

CUST. Dear me! Then I am afraid I can hardly buy you —what I wanted was a tutor for my handsome son.

SOC. No one could be a more discreet instructor for a handsome youth than myself; it is the beauty of the mind, not of the body, that I make my care.

CUST. Really?

SOC. Yes, I assure you, by the Dog and the Plane Tree.

CUST. Dear me, what extraordinary gods to swear by!

SOC. What do you say? Do you think the Dog is not a god? Don't you know the position that Anubis holds in Egypt, Sirius in the skies, Cerberus in the world below?

CUST. You are right; I was quite mistaken. But what is your manner of life?

SOC. I live in a city I have built for myself, under a peculiar constitution, and I observe laws of my own making.

CUST. Indeed? I should like to hear one of these enactments.

Soc. I will tell you the one which seems to me the most important—it is about women. In my state no woman is to be the wife of any one man—they are to have wives in common.

Cust. What! do you mean to say you have done away with all the marriage laws?

Soc. Yes, certainly, and thereby with all the petty questions which arise out of the subject.

Cust. Well, what are your views about those who are in the flower of youth?

Soc. These are to be given as a special reward to the brave and valiant, who have performed some brilliant and gallant exploit.

Cust. Heavens! what noble liberality, to be sure! But, tell me, what is the distinctive tenet of your system?

Soc. It is the doctrine of Ideas, and of the divine examples of all things visible, the earth and all that is upon it, the heavens and the sea; how that of all these things there are invisible images or Ideas outside the universe.

Cust. Where are they then?

Soc. They are nowhere; for if they were anywhere, they would not exist at all.

Cust. These images of yours are quite invisible to me.

Soc. Of course they are; for your mind's eye is blind. But I can see the images of all things; your other self, for instance, whom the eye cannot see, and mine as well. In short, I see everything double.

Cust. I really think you are worth buying; you are so clever and clear-sighted. What is your price for him?

Herm. Oh, I'll let you have him for two talents.

Cust. I'll take him at that, but you must let me pay later on.

Herm. What is your name?

CUST. Dion of Syracuse.

HERM. Well, take him away, and I wish you joy of him. Now, Epicurus, I'll call you. Who'll buy this one? He is a disciple of that laughing fellow there, and of the toper that we put up a short time ago. His knowledge is superior to theirs in one point however—he is more of an unbeliever. As for his other qualities, I may say he is a pleasant companion and a great lover of good living.

CUST. What is your price for him?

HERM. Two minae.

CUST. There you are—but, by the way, you might let me know what he likes best to eat?

HERM. Oh, anything sweet and tasting like honey—figs in particular.

CUST. Well, there is no difficulty about that. I shall get him slabs of those cheap pressed figs from Caria.

ZEUS. Now call up another—that one with the cropped head—I mean the disagreeable-looking fellow that came from the Painted Porch, you know.

HERM. That is a good idea, for I think quite a number of people have come here on purpose to buy him, and are only waiting till we come to him. Now, gentlemen, here is the choicest and most perfect lot of all; I offer you Virtue itself for sale—nothing less. Who wants to have all knowledge for his sole possession?

CUST. What do you mean?

HERM. I mean that you have before you the only wise man; he alone is handsome, just, or noble; he is the only true king, orator, rich man, lawgiver, or anything else.

CUST. Then am I to understand that he is also the only true cook? And, by Jove, perhaps he is also the one

currier, or carpenter—in short, the one tradesman of any kind?

HERM. So it would seem.

CUST. Well, come now, my good man, since I propose to buy you, tell me what sort of person you are, and in the first place whether you do not bitterly resent being put up for sale as a slave?

CHRYSIPPUS. Not at all; these things are not in our power; and if a thing is not in our power, it follows that it is a matter of indifference.

CUST. I don't understand what you mean.

CHRYS. What? don't you understand that of such things some are relatively preferable, while others, again, are the reverse?

CUST. I don't follow your meaning even now.

CHRYS. Very likely you don't, because you are not accustomed to our phraseology, and, moreover, you are devoid of the faculty of apprehension. But the virtuous man, and he who has mastered the theory of logic, not only knows all this, but can also tell the nature of symbama and parasymbama, and how they differ from one another.

CUST. Dear me! I beg you, in the name of philosophy herself, do not refuse to tell me one thing more—what exactly are symbama and parasymbama? Somehow I find an extraordinary charm in the mere sound of these two words.

CHRYS. I will tell you with pleasure. Suppose a lame man should strike his lame foot against a stone, and so receive a wound; then his lameness is a symbama, and the wound he gets in addition is a parasymbama.

CUST. Heavens! what extraordinary acuteness of mind! And what other wonderful things do you know?

CHRYS. I understand the art of weaving meshes of words

in which I entangle those who converse with me, and hedge them in. I reduce them to silence, in fact, by fairly muzzling them. And the means whereby I accomplish this is the famous device of the Syllogism.

CUST. Good gracious, what an irresistible and powerful instrument!

CHRYS. Yes, indeed. Just see here. Have you a son?

CUST. Why do you ask?

CHRYS. Suppose a crocodile were to catch him playing about the river bank and carry him off, and then promise to restore him to you on condition that you guess correctly what he really means to do—whether to give back the child or not. What would you say he had determined on?

CUST. That is a hard question; indeed, I am at a loss to see how I could possibly answer. Pray, in Heaven's name, do you answer for me, and save my child lest the crocodile eat him up before the answer is given.

CHRYS. Don't be afraid. I will teach you something even more wonderful.

CUST. What is that?

CHRYS. The 'Reaper,' and the 'Ruler,' and, besides all this, the 'Electra' and the 'Veiled Face.'

CUST. What do you mean by the Veiled Face or by the Electra?

CHRYS. I mean the famous Electra herself—the daughter of Agamemnon—she who at one and the same time knows and does not know the same thing. For when Orestes appears before her in disguise she knows that Orestes is her brother, but that the person before her is Orestes she does not know. Now you shall hear the wonderful syllogism of the Veiled Face. Answer me: do you know your own father?

CUST. To be sure, I do.

CHRYS. Well, then, if I were to set before you a man with his face veiled and ask, 'Do you know this person?' what would you say?

CUST. Of course I should say I did not know him.

CHRYS. And yet this very man was your father; so, if you don't know him, it is clear that you don't know your own father.

CUST. No, but when I uncover him, I shall know the truth. However, be that as it may, tell me what is the end of your philosophy; what do you do when you have once attained to the highest pinnacle of virtue?

CHRYS. Then I shall have the greatest blessings of nature for my possession—I mean health and wealth and all things of that sort. But first there is need of much preliminary toil and labour, training one's eyes to read closely written books, collecting notes and commentaries, and storing one's mind with eccentric expressions and paradoxical sayings. And, most important of all, no one may become a true sophist till he has drunk three draughts of hellebore, one after the other.

CUST. Well, all this is wonderfully grand and noble. But how about being a miser and a usurer, for I see that these also are characteristics of yours. Are we to regard these as becoming in a person who has taken the draughts of hellebore and is perfect in virtue?

CHRYS. Certainly; indeed, it is to the wise man that usury properly belongs. For, since reasoning, which is his peculiar province, is nothing but putting two and two together, then money-lending and the calculation of interest are obviously akin to it. Hence it follows that the latter are proper to the perfect man, no less than the former. And this applies not only to simple loans,

such as anybody may make, but to interest upon interest. For, of course, you know some loans are primary and others secondary, and, as it were, the children of the former. Now you see how the syllogism runs: A man who may take the first interest may take the second interest: The wise man may take the first interest: Therefore the wise man may take the second interest.

CUST. Then does the same hold good with regard to the wages you accept for teaching wisdom to the young? Does it follow that the just man only is to take pay for virtue?

CHRYS. Quite correct. You see, it is not for my own sake that I accept pay, but for my pupil's; for since there must always be one who pours out and one who takes in, I make it my business to see that it is I who do the latter, and my pupil who does the former.

CUST. But it ought to be just the contrary; it is the young man who ought to take in, and you, who are the only rich man, should pour out of your wealth.

CHRYS. It is all very well for you to joke. But just see that I don't hit you with my indemonstrable or axiomatic syllogism.

CUST. And pray what awful consequences would follow if you did?

CHRYS. Doubt, and silence, and distraction of mind. More than that, if I choose, I can turn you into a stone upon the spot.

CUST. Into a stone? How will you do that? You certainly do not look much of a Perseus.

CHRYS. I will show you. Is a stone a body?

CUST. Certainly.

CHRYS. Well, then, is not a living creature a body?

CUST. Undoubtedly.

CHRYS. And are you a living creature?

CUST. I rather think so.

CHRYS. Then, since you are a body, you are a stone.

CUST. Heaven forbid! For goodness' sake, release me, and make me a human being again, as I was before!

CHRYS. Nothing easier: you shall soon find yourself a man again. Tell me: are all bodies living creatures?

CUST. No.

CHRYS. Well, then, is a stone a living creature?

CUST. No.

CHRYS. And are you a body?

CUST. Yes.

CHRYS. Then, being a body, are you a living creature?

CUST. Yes.

CHRYS. Then it follows that since you are a living creature, you cannot be a stone.

CUST. You were just in time; for, indeed, my limbs were already beginning to grow chill and rigid like Niobe's own. Still, I think I shall buy you. How much do you want for him?

HERM. Twelve minae.

CUST. Here is your money.

HERM. Are you the sole purchaser?

CUST. Not I. I am acting on behalf of all those people you see there.

HERM. Well, there are plenty of them, to be sure, and their shoulders seem broad enough; in fact, they are just suitable for the Reaper.

ZEUS. Come, now, don't waste time: call the Peripatetic.

HERM. Forward, you there, my rich and handsome fellow. Come now, gentlemen, buy the most learned of men—buy the man who understands everything perfectly.

CUST. What sort of person is he?

HERM. He is remarkable for moderation and sweet reasonableness; he is a man of the world; and what's more, he is double.

CUST. Double? Why, what do you mean?

HERM. Well, the man you see from without is one person, but the inward man is apparently quite another. So that if you buy him, you must remember to call the one the esoteric, and the other the exoteric, man.

CUST. What is his distinctive doctrine?

HERM. That the good is threefold, and concerns, first, the soul; secondly, the body; and lastly, external things.

CUST. Well, I call that common sense. What is the price of him?

HERM. Twenty minae.

CUST. That is very dear.

HERM. My dear sir, not at all—especially as he seems to have got a little money of his own, so you had better buy him at once. Besides, in addition to what I have told you, he can tell you offhand how long a gnat lives, and how far down the sun's rays light the waters of the sea, and what sort of soul an oyster has.

CUST. Good gracious! what accuracy of research!

HERM. That's nothing; his other attainments are far more profound. What do you say to his knowing about generation, and the development of the embryo, and how man is a laughing animal, but the ass is not, nor yet a building nor a sailing one?

CUST. Really, such scientific attainments as these are deserving of all reverence, and extremely profitable, so I will give you your twenty minae for him.

HERM. Very good.

ZEUS. Who is left now?

HERM. The Sceptic here. You, Pyrrhias, come out and let me put you up for sale. Look sharp, for the attendance is getting thin, and there will only be a few to offer. Well, gentlemen, which of you will buy this lot?

CUST. I will. But first tell me, my man, what do you know?

PYRRHIAS. Nothing at all.

CUST. What do you mean?

PYRRH. I mean that I do not feel certain that anything has any existence.

CUST. Then are we here nobody at all?

PYRRH. I cannot be certain.

CUST. Don't you even know whether you yourself are anybody?

PYRRH. I am even more in the dark on that point.

CUST. My goodness! what uncertainty, to be sure! But what have you got these scales for?

PYRRH. I weigh the arguments on both sides of a question in them; and when I see they are exactly alike, and equally poised, then I find myself absolutely uncertain as to which of them contains the truth.

CUST. But how about ordinary things? Is there anything else you can do?

PYRRH. Oh, anything, except pursuing a runaway.

CUST. Why can't you do that?

PYRRH. Because, my dear sir, I can apprehend nothing.

CUST. That's likely enough—you certainly do look rather dull and slow. But to what does your teaching tend?

PYRRH. To knowing nothing, and to hearing and seeing nothing.

CUST. To being deaf and blind, do you mean?

PYRRH. Yes, and to being without judgment, or

perception, and, in fact, to differ in no respect from an earthworm.

CUST. Well, this, certainly, makes you worth buying. How much is he supposed to be worth?

HERM. One Attic mina.

CUST. Here it is. Well, friend, what do you say? Have I bought you or no?

PYRRH. That is a matter of uncertainty.

CUST. Not at all—I have bought and paid for you.

PYRRH. I must suspend my judgment on that point, and make inquiry into it.

CUST. Well, follow me, anyway, as my slave should.

PYRRH. Who knows if what you say is true or not?

CUST. The salesman there, and the mina I paid, and all here present?

PYRRH. Is anybody present?

CUST. I'll send you to the grinding mill this very day, and convince you by that low argument that your master exists anyway.

PYRRH. Pray reserve your judgment on that point.

CUST. Not a bit of it. I've pronounced it already.

HERM. Now then, give up resisting, and go with your purchaser. Gentlemen, we invite you to attend again to-morrow, when we shall offer a miscellaneous assortment of unlearned persons — mechanics and other common people of that sort.

CONCERNING PAID COMPANIONS

WHAT first, O friend, what last shall I recount? As the saying is, if I am to describe all that falls to a paid companion to do and to suffer, even though it be one of these wealthy grandees here, whose friendship he enjoys, if, indeed, we must needs call such slavery as his by the name of friendship. I say this because I know much—everything, in fact—about the position of such people; not from personal experience, certainly, for necessity never forced me to it, and Heaven forbid it ever may, but from vivid and detailed accounts of the dependant's life, given to me by a number of people who have been reduced to adopting it. Some of these were still in their misery, and told their tale with much sad bewailing of their woes and humiliations great and manifold; others, who had escaped from it as from a prison, took a certain pleasure in describing the sufferings of the past; in fact, they thoroughly enjoyed reckoning up all they had been delivered from. These were the more trustworthy witnesses, for they had passed, so to speak, through every stage of the mysteries, and could survey the whole, from beginning to end, with the calm gaze of those who have attained to complete initiation. So it was with no preoccupied or careless ear that I used to listen to them, as they told their tale of shipwreck, as it were, and unlooked for deliverance, just as in the temples one may hear groups

of men, with shaven heads, telling marvellous tales of the sea, full of waves running mountains high, of hissing spray and rocky headland, cargo cast overboard, masts shattered, rudders snapped, and the Dioscuri appearing in the midst of it all, for they are part of the regular properties of this sort of tragedy. Or, if not they, then some other *Deus ex machinâ* must sit on the masthead, or stand at the helm, to guide the ship to some soft beach, where she may break quietly and comfortably up, while her crew get safely to land by the grace and favour of the God; which same favour, indeed, they use with thrilling effect in working up their tale as circumstances may require, for they know the contributions of the sympathetic will be none the less liberal if, in addition to being unfortunate, they appear as the favoured of heaven as well.

But the persons of whom I am speaking have a still more woeful tale to tell of the storms they meet with in the houses of the great, and of the monstrous waves (if I may use the metaphor) which in close succession threatened to engulf them. How they set forth on their voyage with a calm sea, and what miseries they endured through the whole of it; how they suffered either from thirst or sea-sickness, and were continually soaked by the salt water; and how at last their ill-fated vessel was wrecked on some hidden rock, or beetling cliff, and they themselves cast on a strange shore, naked, and lacking everything. I must add that in telling these and such-like stories they generally used to give me the impression that they were keeping some things back through shame, and that they were glad to bury some of their experiences in oblivion. I can supply their omissions well enough, however—there was no difficulty in inferring from what they did say the nature of what they left unsaid, and I shall

not scruple, my dear Timocles, to tell you in plain language all I know, for I have for some time suspected you of a leaning to that way of life. Whenever conversation turned upon this subject, and any one present took to belauding this sort of service, expatiating on the extreme happiness of those who lived in it, how they not only have the noblest among the Romans as their friends, and a free seat at the most luxurious banquets, and travel in all comfort and enjoyment—reclining, most likely, in a carriage drawn by white horses—but over and above all this, receive pay for their friendly attentions, and also how all these good things spring up, as it were, of themselves, so that they have only to reap without doing any ploughing or sowing at all, I have noticed how eagerly you would drink in his words, and how you would nibble greedily at the bait. Now, I would wish to be in no way responsible for your fate if you come to any harm, and I would not have you able to say that, when I saw you ready to swallow so dreadful a hook along with the bait, I did not seize hold of you to draw you back, till it was too late, but waited idly by till it was fast in your throat, and then shed useless tears over you, when I saw you dragged helplessly away. I would not have you say this; for, could you do so with truth, your reproaches would be well deserved indeed, nor could I deny that I had failed to act the part of a friend, when I neglected to warn you beforehand. So now listen, please, to what I have to say, and take a good look at the net, and see the hopelessness of all escape from the snare; for it is better to do this from the outside, and at your leisure, than from the inside, when you are already entangled in its folds. Try how crooked and barbed the hook is, and how sharp are the prongs of the spear, by taking them into your hands and

pressing them against your face. If they do not seem sharp and merciless, and likely to inflict horrible injuries as you struggle helplessly upon them, then write me down a coward who goes hungry through his own chickenheartedness, and taking fresh courage, betake yourself to the chase, and bolt the bait whole if you choose, like a ravenous gull.

All I shall say will, of course, be intended for your benefit in the first place; but it is not meant exclusively for those who, like yourself, are professors of philosophy or such lofty subjects, but also for teachers, rhetoricians, and music-masters; in a word, for all who think of accepting a dependent position in some great man's household, with the idea of combining profit and an easy life in their character of teachers and companions. All meet with much the same treatment, and the philosopher fares no worse than the others; yet in his case there is more disgrace and humiliation involved than in theirs, seeing that he is looked on as in no way superior to those whom I have mentioned, and his employer has no more respect for him than he has for the rest. Whatever unpleasant fact, then, may come to light in the course of what I have to say, the blame for it rests, in the first place, with those who inflict the wrong, and, in the second, with those who submit to it; wherefore those concerned must hold me blameless, unless, indeed, truth and plain-speaking are looked on as enormities. As for the general herd of those of whom I have been speaking, trainers of all sorts, and the whole tribe of hangers on and flatterers—people without learning, of little intelligence, and of grovelling disposition—I shall not try to turn them from this life of servility, nor would they listen to me if I were to do so; indeed, I scarcely see that they are to be blamed for not leaving their patrons,

however insolently they may be treated by them; for this is the life they are fit for, and they perfectly deserve the treatment they receive. Moreover, if they did leave them, they would not have anything left with which they might make a living by honest work: if you deprive them of this, their occupation is gone, and they remain mere cumberers of the ground. So that, in point of fact, they suffer no real hardship, nor do their patrons inflict any; for they had all this clearly enough in view when they first entered the household, and their trade is nothing more nor less than patiently to submit to any treatment they may meet with. But the unhappy condition of the cultivated persons of whom I was speaking is quite another affair. There is cause enough for indignation here, and I certainly feel that I ought to do my very best to get them away from it, and claim for them their freedom. So I think it will be well to review the considerations which lead people to this way of life, and prove that they are by no means cogent or irresistible. In this way I shall cut the ground from under their feet, by anticipating the arguments on which they rely for their justification, and refuting them beforehand. You will find, then, that nearly all of them plead poverty and the lack of the necessaries of life, thinking that in this there is immediate justification for their betaking themselves to a life of slavery, and that their conduct must seem wholly pardonable if they show that they are only flying from poverty, that most grievous of all human ills. Hence they always have a quotation from Theognis at the tip of their tongue, and continually we hear those well-worn lines of his about

'The man by penury's chill might enthralled,'

and all the other bugbears with which the baser spirits

among the poets have surrounded the idea of poverty. Now, if I could see that in giving up their freedom in this way they really do find an escape from poverty, I should not insist too uncompromisingly on the advantages of liberty in their case; but since what they do is, if I may borrow from the great orator, like living on sick men's diet, how is it possible not to think that they have made a mistake, when one sees that the evil which led them to take to it remains in full force? For they remain just as poor as ever they were; they must be always receiving and never laying anything by as a reserve against emergencies; all they get (when they get anything at all), however much it may be, has to be spent to the last obol on their present wants. Surely it would have been better if, instead of inventing devices which merely ensure the continuance of their poverty by occasional alleviations, they had turned their attention to the means by which it might be altogether ended. Indeed, to gain this end, it would almost have been worth while to take counsel of their favourite Theognis, and rather to plunge into the yawning abyss of ocean, as he suggests, or cast themselves from beetling cliffs. For if a man who is always poor, and needy, and dependent, thinks that by living in that state he is escaping from poverty, he cannot but be deceiving himself. Others, again, say that poverty would have no terrors for them if they could earn their bread by work like other people; but that their bodies are enfeebled by age or sickness, and that they have taken to this life of servitude because it makes no heavy demands on their strength. Now let us see whether this is true, or whether in this easy position they do not, as a matter of fact, have to work hard enough for their living—harder indeed than anybody else. Indeed, to speak the plain truth, to think that hard cash is to be

got for anything short of toil and trouble, is simply building castles in the air—the thing is absolutely and utterly impossible. If you look at the actual facts, you will see that the toils and fatigue which fall to the lot of the paid companion are so exhausting that his life is precisely that which, of all others, requires the most perfect health and strength, for the fatigues which day by day wear out mind and body are absolutely innumerable, and reduce him to the last extreme of exhaustion and despair. I shall have something to say about these later on, when I am speaking about their other miseries; but for the present it will be enough to show that those who give this excuse for selling themselves are not by any means telling the truth. No; there is another reason still—and it is the true one, though it is the last they will ever own to. It is for the sake of pleasure, lured on by dazzling visions of enjoyment, that they enter so precipitately into the households of the great; dazzled by the profusion of gold and silver they see there, delighted with the idea of all the grand dinners and other luxury they are to enjoy there, and hoping then and there to glut themselves with gold and find nobody to say them nay. This is the real attraction, and the reason why they exchange freedom for slavery; it has nothing to do with the lack of necessaries; on the contrary, it is because they have a craving for what is not necessary at all, and covet the costly luxury they see. They are like the unhappy admirer of a practised coquette, whom she treats scornfully, so as to retain his affection and keep him in attendance, encouraging him only up to a certain point, for she knows that success is the cure of love. However, she desires to keep him living in hope, lest despair should quench his ardour altogether, and he should transfer his attentions to another, so she smiles and promises, and he goes on paying court to her

indefinitely, till old age steals on them unawares, the opportunity of happiness is gone for both, and life has slipped away without having brought anything but empty hopes. It may be that to undergo anything and everything for the sake of pleasure is not altogether to be blamed, but may be, to some extent, excusable if the person who does it really is a great lover of pleasure, and cares for nothing in life but to enjoy it—shameful and base though it be, even so, to sell oneself for it, seeing that freedom offers pleasures which are greater by far—yet still some excuse may be imagined for such conduct, provided that the end be attained. But to submit to all sorts of hardships and indignities, in the mere hope of pleasure, is simply ridiculous folly, in my opinion, especially when they who do it cannot but see that the disagreeables of their position are obvious, and tangible, and unavoidable; whereas the pleasure they hope for, be it what it may, has never once come within their reach in all the time of their servitude, and, what is more, is never likely to do so, as they would see if they would but look at facts in the true light. The companions of Odysseus, when they had eaten that sweet fruit which Homer calls the lotus, forgot the whole world, and recked nothing at all of duty and honour in comparison with the delight of the moment. And, perhaps, their doing so was not so very unreasonable, considering the delight in which their souls were steeped. But to stand starving by, while somebody else eats his fill of the lotus, and never thinks of sharing it with you, and in the bare hope that he may give you a taste of it sometime or other, to forget all about duty and honour—good Heavens!—what despicable behaviour is this! Surely such people deserve that some new Odysseus should drive them back to the sea with blows.

So then, these, or others very like them indeed, are the considerations which induce our friends to accept these positions, and go and give themselves over to the rich to be treated in whatever way they choose. Perhaps, too, we should reckon another, which appeals only to the ambition of appearing to be on terms of intimacy with people of high birth and position, for there are some people who think this is a distinction, and that it makes them something quite superior to other folk; though, for my own part, I do not think the friendship of the greatest potentate on earth is worth having, unless one is to get some solid advantage out of it. This, then, is the object which they have in view. Now let us consider—you and I together—first, what it is they have to endure before they gain their end, and are accepted by a patron; then, how they fare when they are in his service, and, last of all, let us see what is the final catastrophe of the tragedy.

In the first place, it would be a great mistake to think that though these positions be humiliating, yet they are easily come by, and do not require much running after; that you have only to wish for one, and it will drop into your mouth without more ado. On the contrary, if your object is to gain such a post, you must make up your mind to any amount of running to and fro and dancing of attendance as a necessary preliminary; you must get up at cock-crow and wait patiently, though they push you back from the doors and lock you out; you must not mind seeming intrusive and troublesome, and you must submit to be ordered about by some doorkeeper who cannot, perhaps, even speak intelligibly, or by the Libyan slave whose business it is to announce the names of his master's acquaintance, and—what is more—you must assist his memory by a a present. Then you must dress with an elegance which

accords better with your patron's importance than with your own means, and be careful to choose colours which he likes, so that you may not offend his eye by any jarring tint. You must follow him perseveringly wherever he goes, march in front of him, or, rather, be hustled on by his slaves, and, in short, make yourself part and parcel of his retinue, though he may never so much as cast a glance towards you for several days. But if some day you have great good luck, and he chances to see you and calls you up, and asks you some casual question or other, then how hot you get!—you are seized all at once with dizziness and an unseasonable trembling, and make yourself ridiculous to the onlookers by your embarrassment. Should he ask you, 'Who was the king of the Achæan hosts?' and you answer, in your confusion, 'They had a thousand ships,' those of the bystanders who are good-natured will say you are bashful; but the bold and confident will call you cowardly, and the spiteful, uneducated. Having thus made your first steps in the slippery path which leads to intimacy, you go away and condemn yourself to absolute despair. Then, at last, when after 'Nights to sleepless watch, and days to battle given,' as Achilles says (though, in your case, certainly not for Helen and the citadel of Priam, but for the five wretched obols you are hoping for), you gain your end by the help, I suppose, of some stage divinity, the next thing is a strict inquiry into your literary attainments. Of course, this is by no means unpleasant for your wealthy friend, congratulated as he is and listening to his own praises all the time; but it is otherwise with you, who feel that your all is at stake, and that your whole future depends on the result; while you naturally cannot banish from your mind the idea that it is not likely that any one else will accept you if your first

patron rejects you as incompetent. So, with your mind torn by endless distractions, now envying the other candidates—we will assume that there are others competing for the same position—now feeling that all you yourself have said has been deficient, hoping and fearing by turns, you keep your eyes fixed on the great man's face; if he seems to disapprove of anything you say, you feel yourself undone; if he listens with a smile, your joy knows no bounds, and your hopes rise to the very skies. Then, in all probability, there will be some people who owe you a grudge, and would rather have some other candidate appointed; these will traduce you secretly, while you have no idea whence these attacks come, because each shoots at you, as it were, from an ambush. Just think of it: how pleasant for an elderly man like yourself, with long beard and white hair, to undergo an examination as to his literary attainments and hear contradictory opinions expressed upon the subject, some of those present considering him learned and others not. Then, while all this is going on, your whole past life will be raked up; and if any citizen or neighbour, through envy or because of some trifling grievance, chooses to answer spitefully that you are a person of dissolute character, that is enough—the witness's words are, as it were, from the very records of Heaven itself; but if, on the other hand, they each and all speak well of you, then their testimony is looked on as suspicious and doubtful, and in all probability bought. So, you see, there are many points in which good luck is absolutely necessary; nothing whatever must go wrong—this is the only possible chance of success. However, let us suppose everything has gone well, and beyond your utmost hopes; that the great man has approved of your dissertation, and his most valued friends, whose opinion he

most trusts in matters like this, have done nothing to turn him against you; that his wife is willing to accept you, and neither the steward nor the groom of the chambers has any objection to you; no one has found fault with your past life—in short, everything has gone favourably, and all the omens are propitious. Happy man! You are the victor; you shall receive the Olympic crown, or, rather, let us say, you have taken Babylon, or overthrown the citadel of Sardis; the horn of Amalthea is yours, and even the fowls of the air shall not refuse you milk. Surely, after so many and great toils, your reward must be great too! No mere garland of olive must wreath your brow, but your recompense must be a substantial one, fixed on no niggard scale, and handed over to you without any ado when you have occasion for it. Of course, you will have a position of honour, and be far above the ordinary retainers of your patron; you will rest from your labours, and bid farewell to your vigils, and to hurrying through mud and mire; your dreams of enjoyment will come true, and you will have time to stretch yourself out, and sleep comfortably, and do nothing at all but what you have undertaken to do, and are paid for doing. This is how it ought to be, my good Timocles, and, indeed, there would be no great hardship in stooping a little to bear such a yoke as this, light and easy, and, above all, well gilded. But, unfortunately, little or nothing of all this comes to pass; on the contrary, you are no sooner admitted to the household than you find innumerable things in your position which are simply insupportable to a gentleman. Just listen to them, if you please; I will tell you what they are, and then you can judge for yourself if they are what a man of any education or refinement whatsoever could put up with.

I will begin, I think, with the dinner, which is to be, as

it were, your initiation into your new life. An invitation is at once sent to you by some upper servant, whom it is well to propitiate at the outset by slipping five drachmæ at least into his hand, so as to make a good appearance in his eyes. He will pretend to refuse at first. 'What! from you, sir? —I could not think of it,' says he; but murmuring, 'Oh dear no, sir,' he is at last persuaded, and goes away laughing at you in his sleeve. Next, you have to busy yourself getting ready some clothes, and taking a bath; then, when you have arrayed yourself in all your best, you set out for your patron's house; dreadfully afraid that you may get there before any one else, which would be a breach of good manners almost as great as to arrive last of all. However, you contrive to avoid either mishap, and arrive at just the right moment. You are politely received, and some one takes you and leads you to a seat a little above your host, with one or two of his old friends. You feel as though you had got into the halls of Olympus; filled with admiration of everything you see, you sit gazing in rapt amazement at all that is done; for everything is strange and unknown to you. The servants are staring at you, and the guests are all watching to see how you will conduct yourself; the great man himself, even, is by no means free from curiosity on the subject; in fact, he has given orders beforehand to some of the servants to notice whether you often take a look from your coign of vantage towards his wife and children. The attendants that the guests have brought with them see that you are struck dumb by the unfamiliarity of the proceedings, and make fun of you; taking it as a sure sign that you never dined out before, and that it is something new to you to have a table-napkin. So, as is only to be expected, you get terribly hot and uncomfortable in your confusion; and though you are excessively thirsty

you do not dare to ask for anything to drink, lest you should seem to be a toper. Moreover, you are afraid to touch the dishes set before you, because they are so numerous and unfamiliar, and evidently arranged in some sort of order you don't understand; so you are hopelessly at a loss, and, not knowing which to begin with, you have to peep furtively at your neighbour, and by imitating him, you learn the order in which the dinner should be eaten. You feel altogether unsettled; your mind is dreadfully distracted and perturbed; everything that is done fills you with amazement; one minute you are envying the happy lot of your host, who has all this gold, and ivory, and luxury; and the next you are pitying yourself, to think that a mere nobody like you should so much as imagine that his miserable existence is to be called living; and then, again, you bethink yourself what an enviable life you are going to lead amidst all these luxuries, which you are to enjoy on equal terms with your patron. You think that you are to feast like this for ever; and the youthful slaves who wait on you with smiles call up a rosy picture of the life that awaits you; so that, full of delight, you keep on quoting that passage in which Homer makes the elders say it was no wonder that both sides should contend for such a prize as Helen—applying it, of course, to your own past efforts and future enjoyment. Next comes the drinking of healths; and your patron, calling for a large cup, drinks to his preceptor, or whatever it is he calls you. You raise your own; but your inexperience is so great, that you have not the least idea how you ought to reply, so you at once get a reputation for boorishness. Then, too, the toast draws down on you the ill-will of some of your patron's old friends; several of whom are already offended because, though present for the first time, you were given precedence at the table over

themselves, who have spent whole years in attendance on him. Accordingly, you very soon become the object of remarks like this: 'This is the last straw,' says one; 'we are to have new-comers put over our heads.'—'Nobody but these Greeks has any chance in Rome,' says another, 'yet I should like to know in what they are so greatly our superiors? Do they think their miserable little phrases and catchwords are so great a benefit to society?'—'Don't you see what a lot he drinks,' say a third, 'and how he devours everything he can lay his hands on? He is a perfect clod-hopper, and has the appetite of a wolf; perhaps he never before, even in a dream, had his fill of white bread and game. Why, he has hardly left us so much as the bare bones of the birds.'—'Nonsense, how very silly you are,' says a fourth; 'it won't be five days before you see him no better off than ourselves. Just now he is like a pair of new shoes, to be valued and taken care of; but when he has been well worn and covered with mud, he will be thrown aside in wretched case like us.' In this way they bandy your name about among them, and, very likely, some of them begin laying their heads together to concoct some calumny against you there and then. So the whole dinner is, as it were, your own—you furnish the subject of nearly all the conversation.

Then, again, your inexperience has betrayed you into drinking too much of the wine, which is fine and heady, and you begin to feel very uncomfortable in consequence. To abandon the drinkers would be rude; to go on is imprudent; so as the symposium is prolonged, and conversation shows no sign of flagging, while musical and other performances are given in endless succession (for your host wishes to impress you with his magnificence), you remain in a dazed condition, and have neither eyes for the dancing

nor ears for the singing or playing, even of the most accomplished and valuable slaves. Nevertheless, however, you must manage to be enthusiastic in your praises of the entertainment, though all the time you are devoutly longing for an earthquake, or a conflagration, or anything, to break up the party.

Well, my dear friend, such is the first of these delightful dinners of yours. I must confess that to me a dinner of herbs and salt would taste far better than all this, if I could eat it when I chose, and take as much or as little as I chose, if, in short, I were my own master. So then, to pass over the bad night you spend as a result of your unaccustomed indulgence, we will go on to next morning. First of all, you and your patron have to come to an agreement about your salary; how much you are to receive in return for your services, and when it is to be payable. Two or three of his friends are with him; he calls you, and, after asking you to sit down, he begins: 'You have already seen my simple way of living, and how unostentatious everything is here; nothing pompous or grand, but all quite plain and homely. Still, such as it is, I beg that you will look upon it as no less at your disposal than at mine; we are to be in every respect on equal terms. It would, indeed, be inconsistent if, placing as I do my mind, the noblest part of myself, in your hands, and, what is more, those of my children as well (this supposing he has children to be educated), I should not regard you as sharing with me in my mere worldly possessions. However, since some definite amount must of necessity be named, I do not lose sight of the fine moderation of your character, and your independence of things external, and I quite understand that the motive which has brought you to my house is no sordid desire for money, but your knowledge of my great

regard for you, and the general respect which your position here will ensure for you. Still, as I said just now, some definite sum must, of course, be arranged; and I shall leave it to yourself, my dear friend, to say what it is to be, though, perhaps, I may just call your attention to the presents which I shall, of course, offer you at the various festivals throughout the year, for you may be sure I shall not neglect these, even though we make no distinct agreement on the subject at present. As you know, there are in the course of the year many occasions on which the offer of a present will be appropriate, and, no doubt, you will take this into consideration in naming the amount of your salary. But, indeed, I know it is part of the character of you men of learning to be quite above pecuniary considerations.' Of course, by making a speech like that, he plays upon your hopes and makes you as meek as a lamb. You begin, however, to wake a little from your dreams of talents by the thousand, and whole estates and establishments; you begin to think you detect, perhaps, the least bit of meanness somewhere. However, you receive his promises with due effusion, and console yourself by thinking how you are to share all his wealth with himself; flattering yourself that all he said about that was actually meant to hold good, forgetting that promises of this sort, as Homer says,

'Moisten the lips, but leave the parched throat dry.'

At last, out of modesty, you leave it to himself to fix the amount; he refuses to do it, however; and calling to one of his friends who are standing by, he asks him to act as arbitrator, and name some sum which shall not be more than he can afford, burdened as he is with expenses of a more necessary kind, and which, at the same time, shall not

be unworthy of your acceptance. The friend, a spruce old gentleman, accustomed to play the flatterer from his earliest youth, proceeds to harangue you: 'Of course, my dear sir, you will readily admit that you are the very luckiest man in Rome; for you have gained a favour that Fortune bestows on few indeed, many though there be who long for it—I mean, of course, that you have been thought worthy of admission to so distinguished an intimacy, and to share the hearth of the foremost house in the Roman Empire, a privilege which you must surely see is more valuable and precious than all the wealth of Crœsus or the gold of Midas; that is, if you are in your senses. Knowing, as I do, many men of the highest repute who, even if they had to pay for the privilege, would be only too willing to act as companion to my noble friend here, for the mere honour of doing so, and of being acknowledged as his friend and associate, I can hardly find words which will describe your good fortune, who are not only to have this honour and happiness, but are to be paid for it as well. So I certainly think that, unless you are absolutely lost to all sense of moderation, you will be amply satisfied with such and such a sum—naming some pittance paltry in itself and absolutely contemptible compared with what you had hoped for. However, you must now be satisfied perforce, for you are fast in the toils, and retreat is impossible. So you take the bit unresistingly into your mouth, and at first you go quietly enough, for he neither checks nor spurs you too hard till, by imperceptible degrees, you have become thoroughly accustomed to him. After this, the outside world is full of envy of you; seeing you spending your time within the great man's gates and going in and out at will, and, in short, that you have become quite a member of the family. You yourself, however, see as yet no reason

why you should strike them as being so particularly lucky; though you still cherish your pleasing illusions about things going better by and by. It turns out, however, that what does happen is exactly the contrary; instead of improving, they get steadily worse, like the famous offerings of Mandrabulus, and your hopes grow daily fainter, and recede farther and farther into the background, till you begin, slowly and gradually, like one gazing round him in a dim light, to perceive that these golden hopes of yours were nothing but gilded air-bubbles, whereas your labours, on the contrary, are hard and real enough, as well as incessant and not to be evaded. Perhaps you will say, 'But what are these toils? for I cannot see what is so particularly laborious in companionship of this sort; and I do not know what you have in mind when you speak of things which are so toilsome and insupportable.' Very well, my good friend, just listen to what I have to say; and in doing so, do not make it your object merely to find out whether the paid companion's life be one of drudgery or no; for the question of the disgrace and baseness and general servility involved in his position is by no means a secondary part of the inquiry.

Remember, then, in the first place, that you are no longer to look upon yourself as of noble birth or even a freeman; for you will leave all such things as family, freedom, and pedigree behind you on the threshold, when you enter in at the door after selling yourself into slavery, for you may be very sure that Freedom will never go in with you for so ignoble and base a purpose. A slave you will be, whether you like the name or not; and, what is more, you will have of necessity not one master, but many: from morning till night you will stoop beneath a menial yoke for a sorry pittance. Moreover, as you were not brought up to servitude from a child, and betake

yourself to it rather late in life, you will not be very successful in your attempts to learn your duties, and will be of little value to your master, for the memory of your former freedom is your destruction; it comes over you now and then, and makes you struggle, and kick, as it were, against the pricks, so that in the performance of your menial duties you acquit yourself but indifferently. For you are none the less a slave though you are the son of no Pyrrhias or Zopyrion, nor were ever put up for sale in the harsh tones of some Bithynian crier. No, my dear sir, it is on the last day of the month, when you and Pyrrhias and Zopyrion all stand together, and you hold out your hand like the other domestics, and take whatever is given to you—then it is that your liberty is bartered away. There is no need for any crier, when a man puts himself up for sale, and for many a long day has been seeking for a purchaser. What, you contemptible wretch, I might say—especially to a man who sets up for a philosopher—if some murderous pirate had seized upon you when on a voyage, and sold you into slavery, how you would have pitied yourself for your undeserved misfortunes; or if any one had laid hold of you on the road and carried you off, saying that you were a slave, how you would have invoked the assistance of the law, and been in a tremendous fuss and fury, shouting out, and calling on heaven and earth to witness. Yet have you not deliberately sold yourself into the same condition for a few wretched obols; and that at an age when, if you had been born a slave, it would be time for you to be looking forward to freedom? With yourself, of course, you have gone and thrown virtue and wisdom into the bargain too, without thinking anything of all that the great Plato, or Chrysippus, or Aristotle, have said in praise of liberty,

or in condemnation of slavery. Do you not blush to be reckoned amongst flatterers, and idlers, and buffoons, and to be conspicuous as a foreigner among all the crowd of Romans by your philosopher's cloak and your abominable Latin? Are you not ashamed to join in rowdy entertainments with a promiscuous rabble, most of them bad characters? Then, on these same occasions, you have to pay clumsy and vulgar compliments; you drink immoderately; and early next morning you are roused by the sound of the bell from your sweetest sleep, and sent running up and down, without having so much as time to wash the mud of yesterday off your feet. Were you so badly off for beans and wild herbs? Had the springs of running water failed you so completely that necessity forced you to take to things like these? No, plainly enough, it was not the want of beans or water that prompted you, but a longing for delicacies and dainties and fragrant wine. So now, like a ravenous pike, you have got the hook in your throat so greedily outstretched, and, like a monkey chained by the neck to a post, you are a laughing-stock to other people, while you imagine yourself to be enjoying great luxury because you are allowed to gobble up as many figs as you choose; while as for freedom, and all that is noble, they are as utterly lost to you as are your clan and guild at home; the very recollection of them has faded from your memory.

However, if disgrace were all that is involved, perhaps you might be able to reconcile yourself to it, provided only that the work expected of you is not that of a common domestic. Let us see, then, whether what you are given to do is any lighter than what is given to Dromo or Tibius. Your learning, which your patron said was his inducement to engage you, he cares vastly little about as

it turns out, which, indeed, is not very surprising; for, as the proverb truly says, what should an ass care about a lyre? He belongs to the class of people who are supposed to be pining for the poetic genius of Homer, the eloquence of Demosthenes, or the sublimity of Plato; yet who, if you were to empty their minds of their gold and silver and the cares which these involve, would have little left besides pride, effeminacy, and luxury, together with licentiousness, insolence, and ignorance. On these points he is quite independent of any assistance which you can give him; what he wants you for is the impressive effect of your long beard, your grave and reverend appearance, the decorous folds of your Greek cloak, and your reputation as a man of letters, or an orator, or a philosopher. He thinks it looks well to have a person of this sort in his train, because it gives the impression of his being a lover of Greek learning, and of a cultivated taste in literature. So you see, my good friend, it looks rather as though it were not your remarkable scholarship you have let out on hire, but rather your beard and your philosopher's cloak. You must always be seen with him, and never leave his side; you must get up early in the morning, and be on view, as it were, in his service, and never desert your post all day. Sometimes he will lay his head on your shoulder, and talk with you; and though what he is saying is only any nonsense that may happen to come into his head, he shows the world in this way that he is not forgetful of the Muses even when he is out for a walk. But you, poor wretch, have to toil all day, sometimes fast, sometimes slow, up hill and down dale—you know what Rome is like—on you trudge, covered with sweat, and panting for breath as you go. When he gets to the house of the friend he has come to visit, he leaves you outside while he goes in and talks.

There is nothing for you to sit down on; so, not knowing what else to do, you begin reading the book you have brought with you, standing upright the while. When night falls, you are still without food or drink; at last you get an uncomfortable bath at some untimely hour, and when it is almost midnight you go to your dinner; no longer on a footing of equality, and honoured like the other guests, but sent packing, most likely, to make room for some new-comer, and driven into some obscure corner for your dinner, where all you get is a view of the dishes as they are carried past you. Afterwards you will get the bones to gnaw, like a dog—that is, supposing they get your length—and if those who sit above you have chanced to overlook the dry mallow leaf on which the contents of the dish were served, you are only too glad, in your hungry condition, to eat it as a dainty relish. This is not the only insolence you have to put up with; you are not even allowed to have an egg to yourself, for, of course, though visitors and strangers get certain things, there is no need for you to expect to have the same—such an idea on your part would be really quite tactless and impertinent. Then, again, the fowl that comes to you is not the same as other people's; your neighbour's is plump and fat, but yours is a wretched chicken or a dry tough pigeon—a downright outrage and an insult. Very often, if things are running a little short, and a fresh guest comes in, the servant will actually take away what was set before you and go and give it to him, whispering in your ear, 'You are one of the family, you know.' Then, again, if a sucking pig or some venison comes to table, you must at all costs have the carver for your friend, or else, like Prometheus of old, take bones wrapped in fat as your share. But to see the dish always stand before your neighbour till he has eaten

till he can eat no longer, while it actually flies past you—what freeman could stand this, though he had but the spirit of a hind? There is another affront, again, of which I have not spoken yet; while others are drinking the finest and oldest of wine, you have to content yourself with some coarse poor stuff, which you have to be careful to drink only from gold or silver cups, so that the colour of the wine may not be a proof of your dishonour visible to all. You might think yourself lucky if you were allowed to drink your fill even of this however; as it is, you may generally ask the servant for it as often as you like, but he will be careful not to hear.

Your annoyances, then, are many and great; in fact, nearly everything that happens is calculated to hurt you; but, perhaps, the worst of all is when you see some exquisite or dancing-master preferred to yourself, or some little wretch from Alexandria, with whole strings of Ionian ditties. How can a poor philosopher like you expect to sit at table on equal terms with people like this, who are always ready with such pretty love-songs, and carry dainty little tablets in their pockets? So you must hide yourself for very shame in the farthest corner you can find, and groan and lament your hard fate, upbraiding cruel Fortune who has showered absolutely none of these graces on your head. How delighted you would be if you could but compose love-songs, or even sing other people's well! for now you see clearly where the road to honour and preferment lies. Or you might manage to get on, too, if you were but a conjurer or a fortune-teller, and your business was to foretell vast inheritances and honours and wealth; for men like this you can see any day prospering in the friendship of the great, and honoured and thought much of. How gladly you would become any one of these if only you

might cease to be an object of contempt and a superfluous member of society. Alas! poor wretch, you have no turn in this direction either; so you must just fall into the background, and keep silence, whimpering quietly all unnoticed in your corner. Yet if a slave should carry a whisper that you were the only one who failed to applaud your mistress's pet dancer or singer, your position becomes extremely risky, so, parched though your throat may be, you have to bellow like a land frog that your voice may sound loud above the rest and lead the chorus of flattery. Often, when others are silent, you must throw in some studied compliment and show off your skill in adulation; and yet when one is starving and thirsty, to be anointed and crowned with garlands is just a little ridiculous; it is to be like the tombstone of some defunct personage at his memorial feast, for the relatives anoint it and deck it out with wreaths, but the wines and eatables they consume themselves.

Then, again, if your master is of a jealous disposition—if his wife be young, and you not absolutely devoid of the gifts of Aphrodite and the Graces—this will in no way make for peace, and your course is like to have its shoals and pitfalls. A rich man has eyes and ears innumerable; and these are generally anxious to prove their watchfulness by seeing not facts only, but always something in addition. So, then, you will end by having to sit at table as though you were at some Persian banquet, with eyes fast riveted to the ground lest some eunuch should see you looking at one of his master's favourites, or another, standing with bow ready bent, should surprise your glances wandering whither they should not, and transfix your jaw with his arrow, even as you drink your wine.

After this meal you are allowed to go to sleep for a little while; but the crowing of the cocks must be the signal for

you to rise again. 'Wretched, thrice unhappy man that I am!' you groan, 'how could I leave my old pursuits and my friends, my happy life, when I could sleep as much or as little as I wished, and take my walks at my own pleasure, and all to throw myself into such an abyss of misery as this and—good Heavens!—all for what? What is my splendid reward? Could I not have earned more than this in some other way, and had my liberty into the bargain, and been my own master? But now, as the saying is, I am like a tame lion dragged hither and thither by a string; and the most wretched part of it all is that I neither know how to command respect, nor can I conciliate goodwill. I have no experience or skill in the parasite's art—especially as I have to compete with people who have made it the business of their lives—so that I am an unpleasing boon companion, for I cannot even raise a laugh; indeed, I often see by my patron's looks that I am only a nuisance to him, especially when he feels disposed to be more than usually hilarious, for I seem to him surly, and have, in fact, absolutely nothing in common with him. If I preserve my usual grave expression, then I am disagreeable and all but repulsive; if, on the other hand, I try to smile, and force my features to wear a cheerful look, then I only succeed in inspiring him with disgust and contempt; indeed, to confess the truth, the effect really is very much as though a man were to try to play a comic part while wearing a tragic mask. Fool that I am! what other existence am I looking forward to in which I may live my own life, that I make this one wholly over to another?' While you are still indulging in these reflections, the bell rings, and you must go and begin the same weary round again—the same moving hither and thither—the same standing and waiting about—but you must first be careful to anoint your thighs and knees, if

you want to be equal to the struggle which is before you. Then you have to undergo just such another dinner, and at just the same hour; and this way of living, so contrary to your former habits, together with want of sleep, constant perspirations, and crushing fatigue, gradually undermines your health, and brings on consumption or inflammation of the lungs, perhaps, or a colic, maybe, or a grand attack of gout. However, you manage to hold on; and though many a time you ought to be in your bed, even this will not be granted you: they will say your illness is feigned, and a mere pretext for evading your duties; so that, with one thing or another, you are always pale and miserable, and have the look of a man at the point of death.

Such, then, is your life in town. If you have to go to the country at any time, your case is no better. Not to speak of any other hardships, you must always come last, whether it is raining or not, for this is your appointed place; you have to stand aside, most likely, till there is no longer any room in the carriage, and you have to tumble into some cart as best you can, along with the cook, perhaps, or your mistress's hairdresser, without even a very liberal allowance of straw to sit upon. I think I really must tell you what Thesmopolis the Stoic told me once happened to him; it made him intensely ridiculous, of course, and, upon my word, I don't see why it should not just as well happen to any one else. He was living in the household of a wealthy and luxurious patroness—one of the great ladies of Rome—and he told me what happened to him on one occasion when she was going out of town. First of all he was put in a most absurd position by their giving him—a philosopher—a seat beside a curled and scented exquisite who, it appeared, was a favourite of hers, and whose name, he said, was Chelidonion. Just think what a ludicrous

spectacle: the elderly and rather morose-looking philosopher, with his white beard—you know what a long and imposing beard Thesmopolis sports—sitting beside a ridiculous puppy with cheeks rouged and painted eyebrows, who kept casting languishing glances in all directions, and leaning his head to one side (though indeed he looked more like a bare-necked vulture than the swallow his name suggested, for he had preened his feathers so carefully that he had not a single hair left on his chin), and, had it not been for the prayers and entreaties of the sage, he would have sat beside him with his flowing locks confined in an ornamental net. Throughout the whole of the journey he inflicted every kind of annoyance on the unhappy Thesmopolis—humming and whistling constantly, and, if the philosopher had not actually restrained him by force, he would have indulged in a dance inside the carriage. This was not all, however; there was more enjoyment still in store for our friend. The lady calls him to her before starting: 'Thesmopolis,' says she, 'my dear kind friend, I have such a favour to ask of you—now please do say yes at once, and do not wait ever so long before I can persuade you.' Of course he has to promise to do whatever she wants. 'Well,' says she, 'you are so good, and kind, and careful, that I want to ask you whether you will not take my little dog—you know my little Myrrhina—into the carriage with you, and take care of her for me, and see that she wants for nothing? The poor little thing is just going to have puppies; and these horrid careless servants will take no care of me, let alone of her, in travelling. So you have no idea how kind it would be if you would take care of my dear sweet little dog for me.' Finally, Thesmopolis promises, after many entreaties, and when she is almost reduced to tears. But it must have been ludicrous beyond

anything to see the little dog under the philosopher's cloak, peeping out from behind his beard, and yelping with its sharp little voice—you know how these Maltese terriers do—and licking his chin occasionally, trying, I suppose, to find some remains of yesterday's soup there. The dandy, his travelling companion, who sometimes can be rather amusing in the way of making ill-natured jokes at table, said, when it came to the turn of Thesmopolis to be scarified, that all he knew about him was that he had turned Cynic instead of Stoic. I have learned since that Myrrhina's puppies actually first saw the light within the folds of Thesmopolis' philosophic mantle.

Such, my dear friend, are the mockeries—nay, the insults—which are heaped by the rich upon their paid companions, by which they gradually break them in till they become so utterly spiritless that they will put up with any and every kind of indignity. I once knew an orator—one too whose style was of the biting and spirited type—who was asked to favour the company with a discourse during a supper party; and this he did in no awkward or rambling way, but gave a finished and admirably put together declamation. For this he received the contemptuous applause of the guests; who remarked, amidst their cups, that his speech was indeed an admirable one, seeing that its length was measured, not by water, but by wine. And this affront he is said to have meekly pocketed for the sake of some two hundred drachmæ.

However, perhaps, this is not after all the worst. If your patron should himself happen to be of a poetic turn, or have a taste for writing history, it is then indeed that your woes begin; for he will keep reciting his own compositions when at table, and you must half kill yourself with the violence of your applause, and flatter shamelessly,

and rack your brains for fresh expressions of admiration to apply to his performance. Others, again, are anxious to be admired for their personal beauty, and these you must promptly compare to Adonis or Hyacinthus, though their noses may be a foot and a half long. In any case, you must be prodigal with your compliments and praises; otherwise, you are like to fare no better than the too candid critic of the Sicilian tyrant's verses—lack of complaisance will land you in ruin, as it did him at the quarries, for it will be ascribed to envy or ill-will. No—if they want to be philosophers or orators, philosophers or orators they must be for you; and you must declare that even their grammatical blunders, if they should make any, have the true flavour of Attic salt or Hymettian honey, and that henceforth this, and this only, is to be the correct expression.

Still, perhaps, this sort of thing may be to some extent endurable from men; but when it comes to women, then it is indeed too much. Yet these, too, must forsooth have their men of learning in their pay and dancing attendance on their litter; for they think it adds to the number of their attractions if it should be said of them that they are learned —quite philosophers, in fact, and able to make verses not far short of Sappho's own. So they, too, hire orators, and men of letters, and philosophers, to follow in their train and get them to lecture to them—when do you think? for this is a distinctly amusing part of it—either at their toilet, when they are having their complexion made up, or their hair dressed, or else at meals; for they are so full of engagements, they have not another moment to spare. Often it happens, in the very midst of the philosopher's discourse, that the maid comes in and hands the lady a note from some paramour; when, of course, the dissertation

on virtue is suspended until she has written her answer and can return to the subject.

When, at long last, on the occasion of some festival, such as the Saturnalia or the Panathenæa, some wretched little cloak or half-worn tunic is to be sent to you as a present, then the sending of it is attended with quite an extraordinary amount of fuss and ceremony. First, the slave who has overheard his master deliberating on the subject comes running to you, in a breathless hurry, to be the first bringer of the joyful news, and so secure a handsome donation. Next morning, no less than thirteen others appear, bearing the gift itself, each one of whom has a tale about how much he said to his master on the subject, or how he reminded him of it, or how, when sent to choose it, he selected the best. So it ends in each and all of them getting something out of you before he leaves, and each one grumbling because you have not given him more than you have.

Your wages themselves are doled out to you, an obol or two obols at a time; and if you ask for them, you are considered impertinent and annoying. So, if you are to see your money at all, you must flatter and fawn on your patron, and pay your court to the steward as well—though not in the same way—nor must you forget your patron's confidential adviser and friend. Then, when at last you get it, the whole amount has probably long been due to the tailor, or the physician, or the schoolmaster; so that what you receive amounts to nothing at all, and you are no whit the better for it. All the same, however, it makes you an object of envy and ill-will. By this time any accusation brought against you meets with a ready hearing from your patron; for he begins to see that you are worn out by ceaseless toil, that you go about your tasks with limping gait and

failing strength, and that the gout is gradually marking you for its own: in short, he perceives that all that there was in you which could be of any use to him is exhausted, and that he has now had the full benefit of your prime and worn out your bodily vigour, till you are no better than a tattered rag; he is therefore already looking round for some dunghill to throw you on, and for somebody else to take your place, who will be able for the drudgery which is now beyond your strength. So, on some trumped-up story about an old man like you intriguing with his wife's maid, or something of that sort, you are turned out neck and crop in the middle of the night; stripped of everything, poor and needy, and with an awful gout as the companion of your old age. After such a long time of disuse, all your former learning will, of course, have passed out of your mind, while you have gained nothing in its place but a paunch as big as a sack, an insatiable, inexorable tormentor, for your appetite craves for the dainties it is used to by long habit, not to be unlearned without pain and grief. Of course, no one else will take you in, worn out as you are, and like an old horse whose very hide is of little value; especially as every one will assume that the cause of your disgrace must have been something shocking indeed, and you are regarded on all sides as without doubt an adulterer, or a poisoner, or something equally bad. For, though your accuser may say never a word, he commands the confidence of everybody; whereas you are a Greek, and consequently of light character, and with a natural turn for every kind of iniquity. This is the opinion everybody has about us; and, upon my word, not without some reason either. I think the cause of the low estimation in which we Greeks are held is this: many of us worm our way into great houses without possessing any real learning at all; and, in

addition to that, debase ourselves by practising sorcery, and compounding magic potions, and philtres to be used in the service of love or hate, as superstition may suggest. All this is done by pretending to superior culture, and by wearing the conventional garb of the philosopher, with beard of imposing length. No wonder all Greeks are commonly assumed to be of the same stamp, when those who were believed to be of the highest character are seen to be such men as this: not to speak of the opportunity afforded by dinners and other entertainments of seeing the base flatteries to which they will stoop, and their slavish pursuit of gain. Again, those who have been turned out of their employment are bitterly detested by their former patrons, who do their best utterly to destroy and ruin them; and with good reason, too, for they feel convinced that those who are so familiar with the dark secrets of their character, from having had so many opportunities of seeing them stripped of all pretence and naked, as it were, will hardly fail to expose their failings to the light of day; and it is this consciousness which fills them with vexation. You know those magnificently bound books, whose outside is gorgeous with purple and gold; but when you open them, they are full of horrors, such as the stories of Thyestes or Oedipus or Tereus? Well, these rich people are just like them—their splendid and dazzling exterior covers many a dark and shameful blot; if you were to unfold the secrets of any of them, you would probably find a theme lurid enough for a Euripides or a Sophocles, all their fair outward show notwithstanding. All this, of course, is well known to themselves; and this is the reason why they hate their cast-off dependants, and plan their ruin: they live in terror lest those who know their inner life so well should bring the drama out, as it were, and make it public property.

Let me now sum up by offering you a picture of the life of a paid companion, painted after the fashion of the famous Cebes. If you will look at it carefully, I think you will no longer have any doubts as to whether you will do well to throw yourself into it or not. To paint such a picture to advantage I would gladly invoke the help of an Apelles or Parrhasius or Aetion or Euphranor; but as, nowadays, no painter can be found whose art has spirit or vividness or accuracy such as theirs, I must make shift to present you with, at least, the bare outlines to the best of my own ability. Well, then, this is the picture.

A lofty portico of gilded columns, standing high above the plain upon some hill; the approach to it is long, and steep, and slippery; so that very often a man who thinks he has almost gained the top misses his footing and breaks his neck. In the palace within sits the God of Wealth himself, all golden, as it seems, and fair and attractive to view. Next, his worshipper is seen, at the moment when he has just, with great exertions, reached the entrance, standing motionless, and gazing in rapt amazement at all the gold before his eyes. Then comes Hope, fair of face and dressed in rainbow hues, and leads him through the door, still lost in wonderment and admiration, and hands him over to two other damsels, Delusion and Thraldom, who, in their turn, deliver him to Toil, and Toil, when his harsh disciplining has brought sickness on the hapless wretch and banished his comely looks, passes him on to Old Age. In the last scene comes Insolence; who, seizing on him, drags him to Despair, while Hope has winged her flight, and is no more seen. The gates of gold he entered by are vanished too; some mean back door sees him thrust miserably forth, naked, pot-bellied, pale, and bowed with age; covered with shame, and seeking his own destruction.

As he is driven out, Remorse is seen meeting him, with tears of fruitless lamentation which but make his woe more bitter. Such is the picture.

So now, my dear Timocles, let me beg of you to weigh carefully all I have said; and consider whether you will do well to enter the splendid portals you saw in the picture, only to be cast out in the end in the same unhappy plight. In any case remember Plato's words—'Reproach not God: the fault is yours who chose.'

HERMOTIMUS; OR, THE SECTS

LYCINUS. Well, Hermotimus, if I may judge by the book in your hand and the hurry you seem to be in, you are off to your professor. I see you are cogitating deeply as you go; for your lips keep moving as you mutter something under your breath, and you gesticulate as though you were repeating some oration to yourself, devising some knotty problem, perhaps, or meditating on some learned speculation. I suppose it is your principle not to give yourself a rest, even when you are walking along the road, but to be always occupied by something serious and calculated to advance your studies.

HERMOTIMUS. Well, Lycinus, you are not far wrong. I was just recalling what the master said in yesterday's lecture, and going over each point in my mind. You see, my opinion is that one should let no opportunity slip; for we know the truth of that saying of the Coan physician, 'Art is long, but life is fleeting.' And yet he was only speaking about medicine—a subject much more easily mastered than mine. No one can attain to philosophy unless he keep his mind perfectly wakeful and intent, and fix his gaze unflinchingly upon her. And the issue at stake is no trifling one, for it is no less than this: whether one is to live a miserable wretch, and perish with the common herd, or, by attaining to philosophy, live a life of divine felicity.

LYC. Such a reward as this, my dear Hermotimus, is certainly most wonderful. You yourself cannot be far from attaining it, I should say, if one may judge by the length of time you have already devoted to philosophy, not to speak of the excessive labour you seem to me to have bestowed upon it. If I remember right, it must be nearly twenty years since you have done anything but divide your time between running after masters, poring over books, and copying out notes of lectures; while your face grows pale, and your body wastes away with all this care. You don't seem to me to relax your efforts even in dreams, but to live wholly in your task. So, taking all this into consideration, I think you cannot be far from the attainment of the blessedness you speak of—unless, indeed, you have long been enjoying it without the knowledge of your friends.

HERM. My dear Lycinus, how could that be, seeing that I have only just begun to get so much as a glimpse of the road which leads to it? For, as Hesiod says, perfection dwells far away, and the path to it is long and steep and toilsome, not to be climbed without toil and sweat.

LYC. Well, don't you think you have toiled and sweated enough already?

HERM. No indeed: if I had, I should be upon the summit with nothing to mar my perfect bliss. As it is, I am still only at the beginning.

LYC. But Hesiod himself says, 'Well begun is half done.' So that we may safely look upon you as half-way on your upward journey.

HERM. No, I am not even so far on: if I were, much, indeed, would have been accomplished.

LYC. Then at what point may you be said to have arrived?

HERM. I am still at the very foot of the mountain, struggling hard to get farther on. For the path is slippery and rough, and much I need a hand stretched out to help me.

LYC. Then your teacher, no doubt, is the person to do this; he sits, I suppose, on the summit, and, like Homer's Zeus, lets down a golden rope to you, in the form of his lectures, by which he draws you, and raises you to himself and the perfection which he has long since attained.

HERM. Quite so. You describe our relations exactly.

LYC. Well, you must take courage and keep up your spirits by looking to the end of the journey and the felicity which awaits you on the summit, especially remembering that your master is no less eager for your success than you are yourself. But now, tell me, what hope does he hold out as to the time of your arrival? Does he think you are likely to get there next year, or perhaps after the Eleusinian mysteries, or the Panathenaic festival?

HERM. That is much too soon, Lycinus.

LYC. Well, some time in the next Olympiad?

HERM. That, also, is too short a time to allow for such a task as the training of the soul to virtue, and the attainment of perfect blessedness.

LYC. Well, you must surely get there after two Olympiads, or people will say you are lazy indeed, if you do not make the journey in a time that would be quite enough for anybody to go three times from the Pillars of Heracles to the Indies and back again, even though he were to take a roundabout route, and travel about in the various countries on the way. Why, how much higher and more slippery do you make out this summit of yours

to be than the famous fortress of Aornus, which Alexander took in a few days?

HERM. The two cases are not parallel, my good Lycinus, nor is the undertaking of the nature you suppose: this fortress could not possibly be subdued and taken in a short time, even though a thousand Alexanders were to attack it; if it were, there would be many an one to scale it. As it is, a good many do, in fact, begin the ascent. They start with great enthusiasm, and make a certain amount of progress. Some get but a very little way; others go somewhat farther; but when they get, perhaps, to the middle of their journey, and meet with the innumerable difficulties and hardships that await them, they give it up in disgust, and turn back panting and dripping with sweat, unable to bear the toil. But those who persevere to the end attain to the summit, and the happiness which belongs to it; they live ever after a life of wondrous bliss, and, as they look down from these heights, other mortals, who remain below, seem to them but as ants.

LYC. Dear me, Hermotimus, you don't allow a very commanding stature to us poor folks below—we are not even to be as big as the Pygmies, but are actually to crawl on the very ground. Well, of course, it is quite right; you think of us already from the sublime heights above; while to us, the vulgar earth-born herd, it remains to worship you together with the gods, when you have soared above the clouds to that ethereal region whither you have long been hastening.

HERM. May it be granted to me to reach it, Lycinus! But much toil still remains.

LYC. Well, but you have not yet told me how much, or given me any idea of the time required.

HERM. I don't really know myself exactly; but I should think it ought, surely, not to be more than about twenty years before I get to the top.

LYC. Good gracious, what a long time!

HERM. No doubt it is, for a great reward involves great toil.

LYC. Well, I daresay that is true. But how about the twenty years? Has your master promised you that you shall live that length of time? If so, he is not a philosopher merely, but a prophet and soothsayer as well—or perhaps one of those people who are versed in the lore of the Chaldeans, who are said to be acquainted with these things. For if it were still an uncertainty whether you are to live long enough to attain to perfection, it hardly seems likely you would take such enormous pains, and toil night and day, when you do not know that when you have almost got to the summit, Fate may not come and seize your foot, and drag you down with hopes unfulfilled.

HERM. Away with you, Lycinus! pray, do not say such ill-omened things. Heaven grant I may live long enough to enjoy, though it were but for a single day, the life of perfect wisdom.

LYC. And would one day be recompense enough for all these toils?

HERM. Even a moment would be enough for me, however brief.

LYC. Well, but how can you possibly know that the happiness on these heights of virtue is so great that it is worth while enduring anything and everything to gain it? You cannot ever have been there.

HERM. I take my master's word for it. He is an excellent authority, for he has already attained to the highest point himself.

LYC. But, in Heaven's name, what did he say it was like up there, or what did the happiness consist in? Was it wealth, or honour, or pleasures unsurpassed?

HERM. My dear friend, do not speak so frivolously. Such things have nothing to do with the life of virtue.

LYC. Well, if it is not that, what are the blessings which they enjoy who have finished their course?

HERM. Wisdom and fortitude, righteousness and justice, and the certain knowledge of how the universe is ordered in every particular. But as for riches, and glory, and worldly pleasures, all these they have stripped off and cast away from them before they arrive, even as men say Heracles was received into the number of the gods, after the fire had consumed him on Mount Oeta. For he, casting away the mortal body he had received from his mother, sped upwards to the gods with his divine nature cleansed by the fiery trial, and purified from all earthly dross. So the wise man, stripped by philosophy, as by some cleansing fire, of the love of all those things which mankind in their ignorance admire, attains to the summit, and there lives in bliss, lost to all memory of riches, and honour, and pleasure, smiling at all those who think such things have any real existence.

LYC. By Heracles on Oeta, a state such as you describe must indeed be full of dignity and happiness. But just tell me this: May they ever descend from these heights, if they wish to do so, and return to what they have left behind them? Or, when they have once attained to the summit, must they remain there, and live always with Virtue as their companion, smiling scornfully at riches, and renown, and pleasure?

HERM. Certainly they must, Lycinus. Moreover, when a

man has become perfect in virtue, he is no longer a slave to anger, or fear, or desire; neither is he subject to grief, or annoyance, or any feeling of the sort.

LYC. Yet, if I were to speak perfectly frankly—but perhaps I had better keep a respectful silence; it may be irreverent to inquire too closely into the doings of philosophers.

HERM. By no means; pray say what you think without reserve.

LYC. The fact is, my dear friend, I rather hesitate to do so.

HERM. You need have no scruple: what you say is quite between ourselves.

LYC. Well, Hermotimus, when you were describing all the rest of it, I felt quite persuaded by you, and convinced that what you said was true—I mean about their becoming wise, and noble, and just, and all that—and I somehow felt a great charm in your words. But when it came to your saying that they despise riches, and renown, and pleasure, and never feel anger or annoyance, then, I must admit—since we are quite by ourselves—that I was rather staggered at that, remembering, as I did, what I saw somebody doing the other day. Shall I say who it was, or is it unnecessary to mention the name?

HERM. Oh, by all means say who it was.

LYC. It was none other than your venerated master himself—a most reverend personage in every way, not to speak of his advanced age.

HERM. And, pray, what was he doing?

LYC. You know that pupil of his from Heraclea, who has been studying philosophy with him for a long time—the red-headed quarrelsome fellow?

HERM. I know whom you mean; his name is Dion.

LYC. Well, just the other day, he was dragging that same Dion off before the magistrate; I think because he had not been punctual with his payments. He had got the man's cloak twisted tight round his neck, and was shouting out in a great rage; in fact, if some of the young fellow's companions had not met them, and got him out of his clutches, I assure you the sage would have bitten his head off, he was in such a towering rage.

HERM. Ah, well, that fellow always was rather a scamp, and very ungrateful in the matter of payment. My master never treated any of the other people to whom he lends money in this way, though there are a great many of them: you see, they always pay their interest punctually.

LYC. But, dear me, supposing they did not, what could that possibly matter to him, seeing that he has been purified by philosophy, and has no longer any need of those things he left behind him?—on Mount Oeta, as you so finely said.

HERM. You don't suppose it is for himself that he cares for such things! He has got a young family, whom he does not wish to leave to a life of want.

LYC. But, my dear Hermotimus, he ought to lead them also upwards to Virtue, so that they may enjoy true blessedness together with himself, and despise wealth.

HERM. Really, Lycinus, I have no time to enter into a discussion with you. I am in a hurry to get to his lecture, lest, all unawares, I find myself left behind in the race.

LYC. You need not trouble about that; he has announced

a holiday to-day, so I can save you the trouble of finishing your journey.

HERM. What do you mean?

LYC. I mean, that you cannot see him to-day—at least on his own announcement—for there was a notice hung up over his door, in large letters, to say that there will be no conference to-day. They say he dined yesterday with Eucrates, who was giving a party in honour of his daughter's birthday, and that he discoursed a good deal during the banquet, and entered into a heated discussion with Euthydemus the Peripatetic, arguing with him on some of the stock subjects of disagreement between their respective schools. The din gave him a headache, and made him desperately hot, for the feast was kept up far into the night, they say. Then, I suspect, he had rather more to drink than was good for him; for a great many healths were drunk by the guests, and he made rather too good a dinner for such an old man. So when he got home he was sick, they say, and when his servant had delivered up one by one all the tit-bits he had given him as he stood behind his chair, he locked them up carefully, and went to bed, giving orders that no one was to be admitted in the morning. I heard all this from his servant Midas, who was telling some of his pupils about it, and a great number were coming away.

HERM. But who got the best of the argument—he or Euthydemus? did Midas tell you anything about that?

LYC. Well, they say that at first it was pretty even between them: but at the end the victory was with your side, and your venerable master completely worsted his adversary. In fact, I understand that the battle was no bloodless one, as far as Euthydemus was concerned,

for he had a tremendous gash in his head when he left. You see, he was boastful and contradictory, and would neither be persuaded nor lay himself readily open to confutation, so your excellent master hurled his goblet at him, and, as it was one after the fashion of Nestor's own, he remained distinctly victorious.

HERM. Capital! There is nothing else to be done with people who refuse to yield to their betters.

LYC. Yes, it is certainly quite reasonable. What could Euthydemus have been thinking about when he ventured to irritate a venerable sage, free from passion and superior to anger, and holding such a heavy beaker in his hand? But now, since our time is our own, do please, in friendship's name, give me a full account of how you first started on the path of philosophy, so that, if it be not too late, I may begin from this very day to keep you company on the journey.

HERM. Would to Heaven you could decide to do so, Lycinus! You would very soon perceive the difference between yourself and other people: I assure you they would all seem perfect children in your eyes, so greatly will you surpass them in wisdom.

LYC. Nay, I should be satisfied if, after twenty years, I might become such as you are now.

HERM. Do not be afraid. I myself began to study philosophy at just the same time of life. I was nearly forty, which is about your present age, I think.

LYC. You are right; that is my age, so let me beg you to lead me on the same path. But, first of all, tell me this. Do you allow students to reply, if they do not agree with what is said, or is this not permitted to beginners?

HERM. It is not, as a rule. Still, if you like, you may

ask questions as we go on, and offer objections too; probably you will learn more quickly that way.

LYC. Well, by Hermes, your patron, I declare that is very good of you. But, tell me, is there only one road which leads to philosophy, namely, that which you Stoics follow, or is it true that there are many other schools, as I have heard people say?

HERM. There are a great many: there are the Peripatetics and the Epicureans, and the school of Plato, and the followers of Diogenes and of Antisthenes and of Pythagoras, and many others besides.

LYC. Well, that is true — certainly there are plenty of them. But are the tenets of all these schools the same, or different?

HERM. Quite different, of course.

LYC. Then, I suppose, truth is to be found in one only, and not in all, seeing that they are all different?

HERM. Of course.

LYC. Well, then, my dear friend, do tell me what guide you were relying on at the outset, when you first betook yourself to the pursuit of philosophy? Why, when so many gates were standing open to you, did you pass them all by, and enter in at that of the Stoics, as though you were sure that it alone was the true one, and led to the straight path, and that all the others opened but to blind alleys, with no exit at the other end? Whence did you draw this conclusion? Now, please do not answer from your present point of view, that of a wise man—or, if you prefer it, a half-wise man—but in any case of one who is in a position to judge better than we ordinary mortals can. Answer me as you would have done then, when you were still among the unlearned.

HERM. I do not understand what you mean, Lycinus.

LYC. Dear me! surely my question is not so very hard. I mean, that as there are so many schools of philosophy, Plato's, for instance, and Aristotle's, and those of Antisthenes and of Chrysippus and Zeno, the founders of your own school, and ever so many more beside these. I want to know on what principle you passed by all the rest, and made the choice you did when you decided to attach yourself to the Stoics. Did the Pythian god send you to them, as he did Chærophon to Socrates, saying that they were the best of all? I suppose, that in handing people over to the various schools of philosophy, it is his custom to select the one most suited to the character of the individual?

HERM. Oh, no, it was nothing of that sort. I never consulted the God on the subject.

LYC. Was that because you did not think the subject important enough to need divine assistance, or because you thought yourself capable of making the right choice without it?

HERM. Yes, I thought I was.

LYC. Well, then, I wish you could tell me how one is to decide, in the first instance, which is the best and truest system of philosophy, and which one ought to choose to the exclusion of the others.

HERM. I will tell you. I saw that the greatest number of people chose this school, hence I concluded that it must be the best.

LYC. How many more were they than those who followed the Epicureans, or the Platonists, or the Peripatetics? I suppose you counted them as they do at an election?

HERM. Oh, no. I did not count them—I just made a guess.

LYC. I see you do not want to give me any real instruction;

you are only trying to lead me astray, pretending that you decided anything so important by making guesses at majorities. You are only hiding the truth from me.

HERM. Well, of course, you know, Lycinus, that was not the only thing. I heard everybody saying that the Epicureans were effeminate and pleasure-seeking, that the Peripatetics were a covetous and quarrelsome set, and that the Platonists were puffed up with conceit and vainglory. But numbers of people said that the Stoics were of manly character, and universal knowledge, and that the man who walked in their path was the only true king, the only man who is really rich, or wise, or any thing else that one would wish to be.

LYC. I suppose the people who said all this were not Stoics themselves, for of course you would not have put any faith in their self-laudations?

HERM. Of course not—it was from others that I heard it.

LYC. Not from any of the rival schools, I suppose?

HERM. Oh dear, no.

LYC. Then it must have been the unlearned, who belong to no school at all?

HERM. Yes, of course.

LYC. There you are—trying to throw dust in my eyes again, and hiding the truth. One would think you were talking to some Margites, who would be silly enough to believe that a man of the intelligence of my friend Hermotimus, and forty years of age to boot, would form his opinion on such a subject as philosophy and philosophical schools from the irresponsible chatter of persons ignorant of the subject, and make them his guides in a choice which surely demands more worthy advisers. You need not ask me to believe this of you.

HERM. Well, but, Lycinus, it was not only from what I

heard from others that I judged, but from what I saw myself. I observed how discreet the demeanour of the Stoics was, and how orderly their dress, how they seemed always absorbed in meditation, and the manly look they had—most of them with shaven heads—and how they avoided anything like an air of luxury, without falling into the opposite extreme of neglectfulness and disagreeable eccentricity, as the Cynics do, but always kept to that middle course, which all agree to be the safest path.

LYC. Then, did you also see them behaving as I have just been saying I saw your master behave—practising usury, for instance, and exacting interest without compunction? Did you ever see them contentious and quarrelsome in society, or otherwise acting as he is said to have done? Or do such things seem of small importance in your eyes, so long as a man's dress is correct, his beard long and his hair short? Is this to be the test we are to use henceforth?—the canon, we may say, of Hermotimus—'By his outward appearance the virtuous man is known, by his gait and hairdressing. If any man have not these as they should be, and be not of a sad and speculative countenance, he is to be rejected, and excluded from the number of the wise.' Really, Hermotimus, you must be making fun of me again, and trying whether you can't impose upon my credulity.

HERM. Why do you say that?

LYC. Because, my dear friend, this criterion of yours—outward appearance, I mean—is one which is appropriate, not to philosophers, but to statues: in their case, no doubt, we may infer from dignity of bearing, and comeliness of drapery, that it is a Phidias, or an Alcamenes, or a Myron, who has modelled them to the highest

perfection of form; but if this is what we are to go by in the case of philosophers, what is to become of the blind man who should wish to devote himself to philosophy? By what sign is he to distinguish the master who professes the true system, seeing that neither his personal appearance nor his gait is visible to him?

HERM. I am not talking about blind men, Lycinus; I have nothing to do with them.

LYC. Nay, but, my good Hermotimus, surely, in matters of such importance and value to all, there ought to be some sign or token which shall be perceptible and intelligible to all. However, if you like, let the blind be denied the blessings of philosophy, even as they are denied the blessing of sight, though I should have thought that they, above all men, should be allowed to turn to philosophy for support in their affliction. But as for those who see, however sharp their eyes may be, how are they to discern the qualities of the soul by looking, as it were, at her outward wrappings? What I mean is this:—Was it not from admiration of these people's mental qualities that you attached yourself to them, and was it not with a view to your own mental improvement?

HERM. Of course.

LYC. Well, then, how was it possible for you to tell by such tokens as those you speak of, who was a true lover of wisdom and virtue, and who was not? Such qualities of the soul do not generally shine visibly through the body, but are hidden in secret—only to be discovered at long last, when time and intimacy have proved that a man's actions correspond with his professions. I suppose you know the story of how Momus found fault with Hephæstus? if you do not, let me tell it to you

now. The legend says that there was strife between Athena and Poseidon and Hephæstus, about their skill in craftsmanship; and that Poseidon made a bull, Athena a house, and Hephæstus a man, and that they submitted their work to Momus whom they had chosen as arbitrator. The criticisms he made on the work of Athena and Poseidon have nothing to do with our present discussion; but he found fault with the man, and rebuked Hephæstus, his maker, because he had omitted to set little doors in his breast, so that, when they were thrown open, all the man's thoughts and wishes might be known, and whether he were lying or telling the truth. Momus suggested this because his sight was too dim to see these things without some such contrivance; but you, it seems, are keener of vision than Lynceus himself, and can see right into the human heart, and all things are open to you so that you know, not only what each man's intentions are, and what he knows, but also whether he is better or worse than other people.

HERM. I see you are laughing at me, Lycinus. But I chose as Heaven approved, and I do not repent my choice. And that is enough for me, at least.

LYC. Then will you not share your secret, even with an old friend like me, but leave me to perish in my ignorance, along with the common herd?

HERM. I am doing my best; but you won't be satisfied with anything I can say.

LYC. On the contrary, you won't say anything with which I can be satisfied. Well, since you deliberately hide the truth, and keep me out of it, lest I should become as good a philosopher as yourself, I shall have to try and find out for myself, as best I may, what is the true test

of these things, and the safest doctrine. So just give me your attention a little, if you do not object.

HERM. Not at all—perhaps you may say something worth hearing.

LYC. Listen, then. Only, pray, don't laugh at me if I betray my lack of training—it is your own fault, you know, because you will not speak plainly, though you know so much better. Well, then, I picture virtue to myself as something like this:—A city whose inhabitants are perfectly happy, as your master would tell us if, by some means, he could come down to us from thence; they are all perfect in wisdom, all brave, just, and temperate—in short, but a little lower than the gods. In that city are never seen those crimes so common here below, theft, violence, and fraud, but they live together in all peace and concord; and no wonder, for they have put away from among them all the things which stir up strife, and for which men quarrel and plot against each other here. They have neither gold, nor glory, nor earthly pleasure, that they should strive for them: they have long since banished all such things, as useless in a city such as theirs. So they live a life of calm and happiness, with just government and equal rights, and liberty and every other blessing.

HERM. Well, then, Lycinus, should not all men long to be citizens of such a city, neither counting the toil, nor giving up in despair because of the length of the journey, if but they, too, may reach the city, and be enrolled among its members and share its privileges?

LYC. Yes, truly this above all is worth striving for, even though a man should cast away all other things for the sake of it. For this he might well hold in small account the claim his country has upon him, and

reck little of children or parents, if he have them, who may seek with tears to keep him back, but rather urge them, if it may be, to set forth on the same path themselves, and, if they be unwilling or unable to follow, he should shake them off, and himself make straight for that blessed city, leaving his very garment in their hands, if they seek to hold him back by it as he hastens thither; for there is no fear of being shut out, if one should arrive there naked. Once, long ago, I heard an old man tell what that city was like, and he tried to induce me to follow him to it, promising that he would be my guide himself, and enrol me as a member of his own tribe when I should get there, so that I might share his privileges and be happy with all the rest. But I turned a deaf ear to him, in my youthful folly (for this was fifteen years ago) else, perhaps, I might even now have reached the outskirts of that city, and be nearing its gates. He told me many things about it, if I remember right: amongst others, that all who dwelt there were strangers who had come thither from elsewhere, and that not one had been born there. Also, that numbers of barbarians and slaves were enrolled as citizens, as well as deformed persons and dwarfs, and beggars—in short, that any one might receive citizenship who would; for under their laws the roll of citizens was not based on property, nor yet on dress, stature, or beauty, nor on descent from noble ancestors. All these things, he said, were thought nothing of among them: it was enough for citizenship if a man had intelligence and a longing for the right, and industry and perseverance, and had not been discouraged by the many difficulties which beset the road. The man who showed himself possessed of these qualities, and went

on till he reached the city, became a citizen then and there, whosoever he might be, and had equal rights with all the rest. But of inferior or superior, of noble or humble, bond or free, there was not so much as any mention among them.

HERM. You see, then, Lycinus, that it is for nothing vain or little worth that I toil, in my longing for this fair and blessed city.

LYC. You cannot long for it more than I do, Hermotimus; there is nothing I more earnestly desire. If only that city had been near, and plain for all to see, you may be sure that I should long ago have made my way unhesitatingly to it, and should by this time have been quite an old inhabitant. But, since both you and Hesiod are agreed that it lies far away, we must needs seek the road which leads to it, and the best available guide as well. Do you not think so?

HERM. Of course—that is the only thing to do.

LYC. Well, then, as far as promises and professions of knowledge go, there is quite an abundance of guides, for they stand by in crowds, each saying he is a native of the city. But it seems that there is not one road thither, but many, and all perfectly different. One leads to the west, another to the east; one to the north, another to the south; one through meadows and orchards, and dewy shades, and has no obstacles or difficulties at all; another is rocky and rough, and gives promise of much heat, and thirst, and toil. Yet they are all said to lead to this single city, notwithstanding their taking utterly different directions. This, then, is the cause of my hesitation. To whichever path I turn, I find a man standing at the entrance—a most trustworthy-looking person. He holds out his hand, and

invites me to go by his road, saying that he alone knows the right way, and that the rest are all astray, and have neither arrived at the city themselves nor can they lead others thither. When I go to the next, the man there makes the same promises about his road, and speaks with like disparagement of the others: the next to him does the same, and so with all the others in succession. So the multitude of roads, and the lack of agreement between them, causes me much perplexity and confusion of mind, especially the over-zeal of the guides—each man recommending his own —so that I cannot tell which road to turn into, or by following which of the guides I may arrive at the city.

HERM. But I can free you from your doubts; you cannot go wrong, you know, if you trust to those who have gone on before you.

LYC. To whom do you mean?—to those who have gone by which road and followed which guide? Here is the old difficulty again in another form; the only difference is that individuals have been substituted for systems.

HERM. How do you mean?

LYC. I mean that a man who has selected Plato's path, for instance, and has made him his guide, will of course speak in praise of that road; while the man who has chosen that of Epicurus will recommend it, and so on with the others — you yourself, for instance, would advocate the Stoic road. Am I not right, Hermotimus? is not this the case?

HERM. Yes, of course.

LYC. Then you have not removed my perplexity at all: I am as much as ever in doubt as to which of the travellers I am to trust. For I perceive that all of

them, and their leaders as well, after trying one road only, are loud in their praises of it, and declare it is the only one which leads to the city; and, of course, I cannot tell whether they are right or wrong. That each of them has arrived at some end and seen some city, I am prepared to admit; but that does not prove that the city he has seen is the right one—the one city of which you and I desire to be made citizens. How do I know that, though wishing to go to Corinth, he may not have got to Babylon instead, and imagine that it is Corinth he sees before him? for it does not follow that if he sees a city, he sees Corinth, since Corinth is not the only city in the world. But what perplexes me most is the knowledge that, as there is only one Corinth, there can only be one road to it from hence, and that roads leading in other directions may lead anywhere else in the world, but not thither unless one is so abjectly silly as to believe that the road to the North Pole and that to the Indies can both lead to Corinth as well.

HERM. My dear Lycinus, how could they do so, leading, as they do, in opposite directions?

LYC. Very well, then, my dear friend, the choice of a road and of a guide is one which involves no little consideration, and we should certainly not go wherever our steps may lead—following our noses, as the saying is—otherwise we may find that, instead of taking the road to Corinth, we have wandered into that which leads to Babylon, or perhaps to Bactria. Neither would it be a good plan to trust to luck for finding the right path, and turn at haphazard into any that presents itself. Of course, it might possibly turn out to be the right one, and perhaps such a thing may actually have

happened in the course of time; but, for my part, I object to recklessly trusting issues of such importance to the hazard of the die, nor do I see why we should confine our chances to such narrow limits, or, as the proverb says, choose a wicker basket in which to cross the Ionian or the Ægean Sea. How, in that case, could we justly blame Fortune, if she did not succeed in hitting the one true mark amidst so many false ones? Why, even Homer's famous archer—Teucer, I think it was—did not succeed in this; for, when he tried to shoot the dove, he missed the bird, and only cut the string which tied her. It is much more reasonable to expect that one of the multitudinous falsehoods should be hit and brought down, rather than the truth, which is one among so many. So I should think it is highly probable that, instead of lighting on the right path, we may find ourselves wandering in one of the others, if we trust to chance to make a better choice than ourselves. Then again, it is not very easy for a man to turn back again and retreat, when he has once loosed his shore ropes and shaken out his sails to the wind; but he must go rushing on over the water, even though, as is most likely, he be sea-sick, and frightened, and stupefied by the tossing of the sea. So, before sailing, he ought to go up to some watch-tower, and see if the wind be fair and favourable for a voyage to Corinth; and, what is more, he should choose a skilful pilot and a stout ship, strong enough to live in such a heavy sea.

HERM. Yes, it would certainly be much better to do that. But I know quite well that, if you were to make the round of the whole of them, you would never find better guides, or more experienced pilots, than the

Stoics; and if you really want ever to get to Corinth you should follow them, and walk in the footsteps of Chrysippus and Zeno. It is the only way.

LYC. Now, really, my dear Hermotimus, don't you see that you are simply repeating the universal formula? That is just what the Platonists say, or the Epicureans, and all the rest as well—each one declaring that I shall never get to Corinth unless I go his way. So I must either believe all, which is ridiculous, of course, or else disbelieve all; and, certainly, some such course seems safer until I can find the truth. Suppose, now, that while I am in my present state of ignorance as to which of all these is right, I were to choose your school, on account of the confidence I feel in you, my very good friend, certainly, but acquainted with the Stoic doctrines alone, and with experience only of their road, and that then some god should bring Plato, and Pythagoras, and Aristotle and the rest to life again, and they were to stand round me, and question me —or even, perhaps, hale me before the courts upon a charge of outrage — and upbraid me, saying, 'My good man, what possessed or persuaded you to prefer Chrysippus and Zeno, men of yesterday, to us, who are of far more ancient fame, without so much as giving us a hearing, or making any inquiry into our teaching?' How should I answer that? Would it do if I were to say that I did it on the advice of my friend Hermotimus? Would they not be certain to say, 'We do not even know who this Hermotimus is, nor does he know us: so you had no right to condemn us all, and let judgment go against us in default, just because you were persuaded by somebody who knows only one system of philosophy, and that

even, perhaps, not thoroughly. This is not the course that our lawgivers prescribed for judges, Lycinus—to hear one party, and not allow the other to plead in his own behalf: on the contrary, they bade them give both an equal hearing, so that they may the better examine the statements on either side, and so distinguish the false from the true, and, should they fail in this duty, an appeal is allowed to another tribunal.' Something of this kind I think they would be likely to say. Perhaps one of them would put this question as well: 'Tell me, Lycinus, suppose some Ethiopian who, having never been outside his own country, had never seen any race of men such as ourselves, should insist, in some assembly of Ethiopians, that nowhere on earth could men be found who had white skin or fair hair—would they believe him? Would not some of the elders of the Ethiopians say, "How do you know that, pray, with so much certainty? You have never been away from our country, or seen what things are like elsewhere."' I should say the elder man was right, for my part; don't you?

HERM. Certainly; I think his rebuke would be well deserved.

LYC. So do I: but I am not so sure if you will agree with the next thing I am going to say, which seems to me no less certain.

HERM. What is that?

LYC. Why, the resuscitated philosopher will, of course, go on to say something like this: 'Well, then, Lycinus, this is like the case of a man who only knows the doctrine of the Stoics, like your friend Hermotimus, who has never travelled from beyond the bounds of his own school, and never ventured into the territory of

the Platonists, or of the Epicureans, or of any one else. So, if he says that beauty and truth of doctrine are the peculiar and exclusive property of the Stoics, is he not over confident when he makes assertions about all, though knowing only one, never having, as it were, set foot beyond the bounds of Ethiopia? Now what answer would you make if he said this?

HERM. The true and obvious answer: namely, that though I devote myself to the study of the Stoic doctrines, seeing that I have attached myself to that school, I am by no means ignorant of the views held by the other sects; for my master always explains them to us, in the course of his lectures, and confutes them as he goes.

LYC. Then do you think the Platonists and Pythagoreans and Epicureans and all the rest would be silenced by that? Don't you think they would laugh outright and say: 'My good Lycinus, what can your friend Hermotimus be thinking about? Does he go to our opponents for our characters, and accept their account of our doctrines as the truth—garbled as it is either through ignorance or wilful misrepresentation? If he saw an athlete practising before the games—kicking into space, or striking the empty air with his fists, as though it were his adversary, would he at once proclaim him an irresistible champion? Does he not know that these youthful exercises are safe and easy enough in the absence of any resistance, but that there is no victory till an antagonist has been overcome, and has admitted his defeat? So let not Hermotimus imagine, when he sees his masters beating the air, that they are defeating us, or that our arguments are such as to be easily overthrown. In doing this kind of thing

they behave just like children, who build their little houses and then knock them down again at once; or like boys practising archery, who tie twigs together on top of a pole, and shoot at them from a few yards' distance, shouting with delight when their arrow happens to pass through the twigs, as though this were some grand feat. This is not how the Persian or the Scythian archers do: they generally begin their training by shooting when themselves in motion on horseback, and then they go on to aim at moving objects, which do not stand still and wait for the arrow, but are in the most rapid possible motion—animals for the most part, and some of them can hit birds too. If they want to use a mark, in order to try the strength of their shooting, they set up a target of wood, or a shield of raw ox-hide; and when they have pierced it through, then they think themselves able to send their arrows through armour, and not before. So, please, Lycinus, tell your friend Hermotimus from us that his masters are shooting at twigs, and boast that they have overcome armed men; they draw pictures of us, and deal them heavy blows; and when, as might be expected, they have gloriously vanquished these, they imagine they have demolished ourselves as well. But each of us may say to them, as Achilles did to Hector—

'But on my crested front thou dare'st not gaze.'

So all these philosophers might speak in common. But Plato, I think, might add a story on his own account, derived from his knowledge of Sicily:—How Gelo the tyrant had an offensive breath, all unknown to himself, because no one dared to tell him of it, until

some foreign slave-woman ventured to let him know the state of the case. Whereupon he went to his wife, in a great rage with her for not having told him, seeing that she must have known it better than any one. But she excused herself, saying that as she had no experience of other men, never having had any close association with them, she had supposed that this was a characteristic of all of them. So your friend Hermotimus, Plato might go on to say, having never associated with any but Stoics, of course knows nothing of other men. Chrysippus, too, might say the same, or even more, if I were to leave him without a hearing, on the advice of some one who knew Plato only. In a word; then, so long as there is this uncertainty about the choice of the true philosophy, it is best to choose none at all. For, under these circumstances, to choose one is to outrage the rest.

HERM. Well, but, my dear Lycinus, for Heaven's sake let us leave Plato, and Aristotle, and Epicurus, and all the others in peace: I have no desire to enter into a contest with them. But let us—you and I—make an inquiry by ourselves as to whether philosophy is what I think it is, or not. Why need we drag the Ethiopians into the discussion, or bring Gelo's wife all the way from Syracuse?

LYC. Certainly, let us dismiss them by all means, if you think they have nothing to do with the question. And now, pray, out with this great idea which seems to be trembling on your tongue.

HERM. What I have to say is that it is perfectly possible for a person who has made a special study of Stoicism only, to know the truth about other schools, even without devoting himself to the thorough study of their

every point. See here. Suppose some one were to tell you that two and two make four; would you need to go round, and ask every arithmetician you knew how many they were, so as to see whether there might not be some who should say they make five or seven? Would you not know, at once, that the person who told you they make four was perfectly right?

LYC. Of course I should.

HERM. Then why does it seem to you impossible that a person who has only heard the view of the Stoics should believe them, and not go about asking others, seeing that he knows very well that two and two can never make five, not even though a thousand Platos or Pythagorases should say they do?

LYC. That has nothing to do with the question, Hermotimus, for you are comparing things which all are agreed on with things which are a matter of dispute; though the two classes are entirely different. Did you ever meet any one who said that two and two make five or seven or eleven?

HERM. Of course not; no one but a madman would say they make anything but four.

LYC. Well, did you ever meet a Stoic — now do, for Heaven's sake, try and give me a sincere answer— did you ever meet a Stoic and an Epicurean who did not disagree, either about the causes or the ends of things?

HERM. Never.

LYC. Then see how shabbily you treat an old friend— trying to put me off the scent—for when we are trying together to find out which is the school which teaches true philosophy, you go and beg the question right off, and say it is the Stoics only who say two and two are

four, which is just the very thing we are trying to ascertain! For, of course, the Platonists or the Epicureans will say it is they who make them four, and that you Stoics make them five or seven. Don't you think this is what you are doing when you insist that the chief good is Virtue, though the Epicureans say it is Pleasure, and when you say that all things are material, though Plato says that the immaterial also exists? As I said before, you are very greedy to go and beg—nay, snatch—the question, and hand it over to the Stoics as their undisputed property, though others claim it and say it is theirs. Surely, in this case, some inquiry is called for! When it has become obvious that the Stoics are the only people who make two and two four, then the others had best hold their peace; but so long as the point is in dispute, we ought to give a hearing to all alike, on pain of being seen to give a biassed judgment.

HERM. I don't think you have quite grasped my meaning, Lycinus.

LYC. Well, if you don't mean this, you really must explain a little more clearly what it is you do mean.

HERM. I will show you what I mean at once. Suppose two men have gone into a temple of Asclepius, or Dionysus, and, immediately afterwards, one of the libation vessels is missing. Will it be necessary to search them both, to see which has it hidden in his clothes?

LYC. Certainly it will.

HERM. But it must be one of the two who has it.

LYC. Yes, of course, since it is missing.

HERM. Then, if the first is found to have it, you will not make the second strip, I suppose, as it will be clear he has not got it.

LYC. Perfectly clear.

HERM. In the same way, if it should not be found on the first, then the other must have it, and you would not need to search him in this case either.

LYC. No, for he must necessarily have it.

HERM. Then, if we find that the Stoics have got the vessel, we shall not think it necessary to search the others; for, when we have got what we were looking for, why should we take any more trouble?

LYC. No use at all, if you find it, and if, having found it, you have the means of ascertaining that it is the one which was lost, or if the sacred object is otherwise already known to you. But the case we are discussing is different. In the first place, those who have been in the temple are not two, but many; and, in the second, it is uncertain whether the missing object is a libation vessel, or a cup, or a crown. As for the priests, no information is to be got from them; for one says it is one thing, and one another, and they don't even agree as to the material it is made of: some say it is bronze, some silver, some gold, others tin. So we must strip every one who has been in the temple if we are to find what has been lost; and even if we find a golden saucer on the first man, we must none the less strip the rest.

HERM. Why so, Lycinus?

LYC. Because it is not certain that what we are looking for is a libation saucer at all; and even if all should agree on this, all are not agreed that it is a golden one. Besides, even if it is absolutely certain that the missing object is a golden libation saucer, and we find a golden saucer on the very first man, even so we must proceed with the search. For, you see, it is not clear that that particular saucer is the property of the god, for there

are plenty of golden saucers in the world, are there not?

HERM. Of course there are.

LYC. Then we shall have to search each person, and put everything we may find on any of them together, so as to be able to judge which of them belongs to the god. Then another thing which adds to our embarrassment is that something or other is actually found upon each man; one has a cup, another a libation saucer, another a crown, and, of these, some are of bronze, some of gold, and some of silver; but whether any one of them is the sacred object we are in search of is by no means clear. So we must needs hesitate to say which of the men is guilty of sacrilege. Even in the case of their all having the same thing, it would still be uncertain which of them had robbed the god, for such a thing might quite well be private property. The cause of the whole difficulty, I should say, is the absence of any inscription on the lost saucer—we will assume that it is a saucer—for if the name of the god or of the dedicator had been on it, we should have less trouble, and, the inscribed saucer once found, we might refrain from further search and molestation of other people. I suppose, by the way, you have often seen the public games?

HERM. Certainly—I have often done so.

LYC. Were you ever sitting close to the judges at the time.

HERM. Yes, at the Olympic games the other day I sat just to the left of the Hellenodicae; for Evandrides of Elis had got me a seat among his fellow-citizens, because I was anxious to get a good view of everything that goes on among the Hellenodicae.

LYC. Then, I suppose, you know how they cast lots as to

how the competitors are to be matched against each other in the wrestling match or the pancration?

HERM. Yes, I know.

LYC. Tell me then, for you know best, as you have been so close.

HERM. In ancient days, when Heracles presided, laurel leaves were——

LYC. Don't mind about ancient times—tell me what you saw yourself when you sat so close.

HERM. There was a silver urn standing by, sacred to the god, and into this small marked lots were thrown, about the size of beans. They were marked in pairs: two with the letter A on each, two with B, two with C, and so on, according to the number of competitors, but always two lots with the same mark. Then each of the competitors came up, and, after a prayer to Zeus, put his hand into the urn and drew out one of the lots, and after him the rest, one after the other, while an officer with a scourge stood by each man, and held his hand, to prevent him from reading what was written on the lot he had drawn. When they had all drawn lots, the alytarch, I think, or one of the Hellenodicae—I can't remember now—went round and examined the lots as the men stood in a ring, and so set those who had drawn the lots marked A to contend with each other in the wrestling match or the pancration, and so with the pair who had drawn B, and then all the others in the same way. This was when there was an even number of competitors, such as eight, or four, or twelve; but if the number was odd, such as five, or seven, or nine, then one lot was cast into the urn without a pair to it, and the man who drew this had to sit and look on till the others

had finished their contests, for he had no corresponding letter. It is a great piece of good luck to draw this lot, for he who does so contends while still fresh against an adversary who is already fatigued.

LYC. Stop there—that is what I wanted. There are then nine competitors, and they have all drawn their lots, and hold them in their hands. Now, when you go round and examine the lots (for I am making you a judge instead of a spectator) you cannot tell, I suppose, which the odd one is till you have been to all the competitors, and arranged them in pairs.

HERM. Why not?

LYC. Because you cannot possibly at once find the letter which indicates the extra man. You see, you are not told beforehand that the odd lot is marked with a K, or an M, or an L; but when you find one marked A, then you look for the other A, and, when you find it, you put that pair together. So again, when you find the one B, you look for the other which is the pair to it, and so on with all, till the only man who remains is the one who holds the lot to which there is no fellow.

HERM. But what if you found that the first or the second man had it?

LYC. Dear me, that is not for me to say; as you are one of the judges, you must surely know what to do. Are you at once to pronounce that the lot you have found is the odd one, or will you not have to go round to all the competitors, and see whether nobody else has the corresponding letter, before you can tell who is to be the extra man?

HERM. I could easily tell without doing that; for if I found that the first or the second of the nine had a

lot marked E, then I should know at once that he was the extra man.

LYC. How so?

HERM. In this way. Two of them have A, and two have B, and of the remaining four two must have drawn C, and two D; so the four letters are accounted for among these eight men. Hence it is clear that the next letter, E, must be the odd one, and the man who has drawn it is the man who must wait and fight the victor.

LYC. Whether am I to admire the acuteness of your answer, or to say what I think without reserve?

HERM. Oh, by all means speak quite freely. At the same time, I really do not see what reasonable objection you can make to this.

LYC. You are going on the assumption that the lots are marked with the letters in their alphabetical order; first A, then B, and so on, according to the number of the competitors, and I admit that this actually is the custom at the Olympic games. But suppose we take five letters at random—for instance, X, S, Z, K, and T, and write four of them in duplicate on eight of the lots, but Z only on the ninth, which, of course, will be the lot of the extra man. Now how will you proceed if you find the first man has got Z? How will you know that it is the odd one unless you go round to all the competitors and find that none of them has the fellow to it, for you will not have the alphabetical order to guide you, as you had in the other case?

HERM. That is certainly a hard question.

LYC. Well, look at it again in another light. Suppose the lots were not marked with letters, but with signs or

characters, like the innumerable signs the Egyptians use instead of letters, such as men with dogs' or lions' heads? However, perhaps, we need not consider these composite forms, as they are monstrosities: let us suppose instead that the lots are marked with quite simple and ordinary figures—men, for instance, on our first two lots, horses on the next two, cocks on the next, and dogs on the last pair, with a lion on the ninth lot. In that case, if you find the lot with the lion at the beginning of your search, how will you know that this is the odd one, since you have not looked at them all to see whether there be not another lion?

HERM. I really cannot find any answer to this, Lycinus.

LYC. Of course you cannot, for there is no presentable one to be found. So that if we want to discover, whether it be the thief of the sacred saucer, or the extra man in the pancration, or the best guide to this city of Corinth, it is plainly necessary in each case that we make the closest investigation, examining each man, and stripping him, and comparing what he has with what others have, and, even so, we shall reach the truth only with difficulty. In the same way, if I am to trust to any one's advice in the choice of a school of philosophy, he must be a person who is acquainted with every school. The knowledge of all others is necessarily imperfect, and I could never have confidence in any one so long as there is a single system of which he has no experience, for, you see, that very one may happen to be the true one. We should not believe it if some one were to bring us a handsome person, and say he was the handsomest man in the world, unless we knew he had seen all the men in the world; for the person in question might be handsome enough, yet it is

impossible to tell if he be the handsomest of all men unless we have seen all. Now we are looking, not for the beautiful, but for the most beautiful; and if we do not find that, we need not consider ourselves to have made any progress. We cannot be satisfied if we merely find a beautiful person: what we want is the most beautiful of all persons, and he must, of necessity, be but one individual.

HERM. Of course.

LYC. Well, then, can you tell me of any one who has made trial of every road, and who, being thoroughly familiar with the systems of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Chrysippus, Epicurus, and all the rest, has finally chosen one out of all these roads as the true one, knowing by experience that it alone leads to perfect happiness? If we can find such a person, we need not trouble to look further.

HERM. I fear such a man as that is not easily found.

LYC. Well, then, what shall we do? I don't think we should give up simply because for the present we can find no such guide. Would not the best and safest plan be to set to work ourselves, and pass through the schools in succession, and examine carefully the doctrines of each?

HERM. Well, it would certainly almost seem so. But how about what you were saying just now about the difficulty of turning back, when one has once put to sea, and spread one's sails? How, then, would it be possible to go along all the roads, seeing that one may, as you said, be forced to keep on in the very first one sets out upon?

LYC. I will tell you. We will imitate the device of Theseus, and get a clew of thread, as he does from

Ariadne in the tragedy, and so go into every labyrinth with easy minds, knowing that we can easily get out by winding it up.

HERM. But who is to be our Ariadne? And where are we to find such a quantity of thread?

LYC. Don't be afraid; I think I have got something which will bring us out if we hold to it.

HERM. What is that?

LYC. It is not an idea of my own, but a saying of one of you philosophers, 'Be sober, and forget not to doubt.' If we don't go and promptly believe all we hear, but listen in a judicial frame of mind, suspending our judgment, and giving a hearing to what follows on the other side, I think we shall easily get out of all the labyrinths.

HERM. A very good idea. Let us at once put it into execution.

LYC. Very well. Which shall we begin with? or does this not matter, perhaps? But whomsoever we begin with—suppose, for instance, it is Pythagoras—how much time shall we allow for mastering the whole of his system? (Don't forget his five years of silence.) I should think that, including the five, perhaps thirty years would be required, or in any case twenty.

HERM. Let us say twenty.

LYC. Then for Plato's school we must undoubtedly allow quite as many years, and for Aristotle certainly no less.

HERM. Certainly not.

LYC. Of course, I need not ask how long you would allow for Chrysippus, seeing that you have already told me forty years is hardly enough.

HERM. Quite so.

LYC. Then we must allow the same to Epicurus, and all the rest in turn. You will not think this extravagant, if you consider how many Stoics, or Epicureans, or Platonists there are who, at eighty years of age, admit that their knowledge of the doctrines of their respective schools still leaves much to be desired. And, indeed, if they did not confess this themselves, Chrysippus and Aristotle and Plato would certainly do so for them—not to go back to Socrates, who, though in no way their inferior, yet everywhere asserted that so far was he from knowing everything, that the one thing he did know was the fact of his own ignorance. So, now, let us reckon it up. We gave twenty years to Pythagoras, and the same to Plato and to the others in succession. How long will this make, even if we assume there are but ten schools to be studied?

HERM. It comes to more than two hundred years.

LYC. Well, then, shall we take away a quarter of the time, and make it a hundred and fifty years, or even the half if you like?

HERM. You know best yourself. All I see is that very few people can live long enough to try all in this way, even if they begin as soon as they are born.

LYC. Then, Hermotimus, what is to happen if this is the case? Must we retract what we said when we agreed that it is impossible to choose the best out of a large number without making trial of all, so that if any one chooses without such trial he is using divination rather than judgment in his search? That was what we said, was it not?

HERM. Yes.

LYC. Then we must certainly live to the age we spoke of if we are to examine all philosophies before choosing

one, and when we have chosen, to follow our choice till it leads us to perfect happiness. Otherwise we are but dancing in the dark, as the saying is—stumbling over whatever we meet, and seizing upon the first thing that comes to hand, thinking it is what we are looking for merely because we do not know what it really is. And even if we do happen to hit on it by some lucky chance, we have still no means of knowing with certainty that we have done so, for there are so many just like each other, each one of them professing to be the truth.

HERM. Well, Lycinus, somehow there seems to be a good deal of truth in what you say; but, if I may speak plainly, I must admit that you cause me no little pain and annoyance by going into all these questions, and insisting on this perfectly needless investigation. Indeed, I think it was bad luck that took me out of my house this morning to meet you; for now, when I was just nearing the goal of my hopes, you have gone and cast me down into doubt and perplexity, by showing me the hopelessness of a search for truth which must last for so many years if it is to be successful.

LYC. My dear friend, you had much better go and blame your father Menecrates and your mother too, whatever her name was, and Nature herself more than either, for limiting you to at most a paltry hundred years of life, as she does other people, instead of making you immortal like Tithonus. All I have done is to join you in drawing the logical conclusion from the facts we both admitted.

HERM. No, you are always a scoffer. I'm sure I don't know how Philosophy ever injured you, that you should have such a dislike to her, and keep sneering at her followers.

LYC. My dear Hermotimus, philosophers like yourself and your master can best tell us what Truth is. All I know is that she is not always very pleasing to those who hear her, but is generally left far behind by Falsehood, who is much more attractive to look at, and, consequently, more pleasing. But Truth, conscious of her own sincerity, speaks to men with perfect frankness, and on this account is disliked by them. Why, you yourself are angry with me at this very moment because I have helped you to find out the truth, and make it clear that it is not so easy, after all, to obtain what we both so earnestly desire. Suppose, for instance, you had fallen in love with a statue, and were hoping to marry her, mistaking her for a human being, and I, perceiving her to be only marble or bronze, should tell you the truth, and warn you, out of friendship, that you were hoping for an impossibility—would you think me unfriendly because I would not let you remain under your delusion, and cherish so preposterous a hope?

HERM. Then what you say amounts to this: We ought never to attempt philosophy, but give ourselves up to idleness and sloth, and spend our time in boorish ignorance.

LYC. Now, when did I say that? I never suggested that we should not cultivate philosophy. What I said was that we ought to do so; but that, since there are many paths which profess to lead to true philosophy and virtue, and it is uncertain which of them is the right one, we ought to be very careful which of them we choose. We agreed that, when there are many to choose from, it is impossible to select the best without making trial of all, and so, of course, it became evident that the process of selection was a lengthy one. I ask

you this question once again: How can you reasonably assume that if you follow the very first person you meet, and make him your guide to philosophy, some happy chance, some stroke of luck, will have guided your choice aright?

HERM. And, pray, what answer am I to give you, when you will neither believe a man can judge for himself unless he lives to the age of the phœnix, and goes and tries all philosophical systems himself, one after the other, nor yet trust those who have gained experience, nor put faith in the recommendation of the many who give their testimony by common consent?

LYC. But who are these numerous persons who know and have had experience of all? If there be but one such, it is quite enough for me—I don't require a number. But if you are speaking of those who have not this knowledge, their mere numbers will not be any inducement to me to believe them, so long as they are pronouncing an opinion on all, when they know one only, or perhaps none.

HERM. I suppose the truth is your peculiar property, and all who devote themselves to philosophy are ignorant fools.

LYC. Now, you really are doing me an injustice, Hermotimus, when you say that I set myself above others, or reckon myself among the number of the wise. Do you not remember that I said emphatically that I did not know the truth any more than other people, but admitted that I was just as much in the dark as anybody else?

HERM. Well, Lycinus, perhaps you are right in saying we ought to apply to each school, and find out what their views are, and that otherwise there is no means of getting at the truth. But to demand such a long time

for the investigation seems to me absolutely preposterous; just as if one could not get a perfect idea of the whole from quite a small part. They say that one of the great sculptors—Phidias, I think it was—when he saw no more than the claw of a lion, at once judged from it how large the whole creature ought to be, inferring this from the size of the claw. You yourself, I suppose, if some one were to show you the hand of a man whose body was concealed, would know at once that what was hidden was a man, even though you could not see the whole of him. In the same way, it is quite easy to learn the outlines of all philosophical systems in a few hours, and the choice of the best of them by no means involves the needlessly elaborate and lengthy investigation which you propose. It is quite possible to judge from a mere outline only.

LYC. Good gracious, Hermotimus, do you positively assert that the whole is to be inferred from a knowledge of the part? For my part, I have always been told that the converse is the truth—that the part is to be inferred from the whole. Tell me this, if you please—When Phidias saw the claw, would he have known it belonged to a lion if he had never seen a lion? Or would you be able to say the hand belonged to a man if you had never seen such a thing as a man? Why don't you answer? Shall I save you from the necessity of avowing that you could not possibly do so? So, I am afraid, Phidias may go, after modelling his lion all to no purpose, for it is clear that he has contributed nothing to your argument. What sort of parallel is this? You and Phidias can imagine the whole lion, or the whole man, when you see the claw or the hand, simply because you have seen a lion or a man before; but in the case of a philosophical

system—Stoicism, for instance—how can you infer the whole from knowing a part? How can you assert that the whole is beautiful, when you have never seen that to which the part you know belongs? As for your saying that one can easily pick up an idea of the leading doctrines of every philosophical system in a few hours; if you mean on such subjects as first principles, and the ends of things, and the nature of the gods or the soul, or which school regards all things as matter, and which admits also the immaterial, which holds Pleasure to be the chief good, and which Virtue, no doubt you can easily hear enough in a short time to make such points as this clear—there is no difficulty about that. But when it comes to knowing which of them is speaking the truth on these points, you had better allow not a few hours, but many a day, for that; otherwise, what possesses the adherents of the various schools to write books in hundreds and thousands, apparently with no other object than to persuade people to accept their particular views on those points which seem to you so simple? As it is, I think you must have recourse to divination to help you in the selection of a philosophy, if you cannot bear to delay your choice till you have carefully investigated every one yourself. That would be a short and easy way, you see, free from delays and complications—just to send for a priest after you have heard all the main outlines of the various systems, and offer sacrifice on account of each of them. In that way the god would deliver you from a multitude of perplexities, by revealing to you the proper choice in the liver of the victim. Or, if you like, I would suggest another, and even less troublesome, way, which does not involve sacrifices nor offerings to any god, or the expensive

assistance of a diviner. All you have to do is to throw lots marked with the names of the various sects into an urn, and get some nice young boy, whose parents are both alive, to take out whatever lot comes first into his hand. In this way, whatever system you had drawn you might adopt as your own.

HERM. This sort of buffoonery is quite unworthy of you, Lycinus. Tell me, if you please, did you ever go to buy wine?

LYC. Yes, often.

HERM. Then, did you go to all the wine merchants in the city, tasting, and comparing, and trying all their brands?

LYC. No, of course not.

HERM. I suppose you were quite satisfied to take the first good wine you came across.

LYC. Certainly.

HERM. Then, could you tell by tasting a little of the wine what the rest was like?

LYC. Of course I could.

HERM. Suppose you had gone the round of all the wine merchants, and said: 'I want to buy a pint of wine, so, please, each of you, allow me to drink up your whole cask, so that I may give each a thorough trial, and be quite sure who has the best wine, before I buy my pint.' Don't you think they would laugh at you, and perhaps give you a ducking with cold water as well?

LYC. I think they would; and, what is more, I should richly deserve it.

HERM. Well, it is just the same with philosophy. Why need you drink the whole cask, when you can tell by tasting a drop what the whole is like?

LYC. How slippery you are, Hermotimus! You fairly

wriggle out of my fingers. But it won't do—in your efforts to escape you have run back into the toils.

HERM. How so?

LYC. Because you have taken wine—a thing whose nature is self-evident, and well known to everybody—and drawn a parallel between it and that which is of all things most unlike it, seeing that it is involved in uncertainty, and a matter of universal dispute. For my part, I cannot see what analogy you can discover between wine and philosophy, unless it is that philosophers, or most of them, sell their teaching as publicans do their wine—diluted and adulterated, and in short measure as well. Now, let us consider this analogy of yours. You say that all the wine in one cask is of one quality—well, of course, this is quite correct; also, that if one should draw ever so little and taste that, he would know at once what the whole was like—which I don't dispute in the least. But what follows? Do philosophy and her exponents say the same thing every day, and speak always about the same thing, or do they discuss one subject one day and something else another? It is evident, on the face of it, that the subjects of discussion are numerous, otherwise you would not have waited for your master twenty years, roaming about like another Odysseus, if he always said the same things, for in that case one hearing would have been enough for you.

HERM. Of course it would.

LYC. Then how can you tell what the whole is like by tasting a little? Since he did not keep on repeating the same thing, but was always bringing forward new subjects of discussion in endless variety, there can be no analogy between his teaching and wine—a thing which is the same throughout. So if you don't drink

up every drop in the cask, you may save yourself the trouble of getting tipsy on a part of it. For it seems that God has hidden that chief good, of which philosophy tells, quite at the bottom of the cask, under the very lees, so you must drain it to the last drop, or you will never find that divine draught for which you have so long been thirsting. Your idea is that it is of one quality throughout; so that if you draw off ever so little and taste it, you will then and there become perfect in wisdom, just as they say that the priestess at Delphi, when she drinks of the sacred spring, at once becomes inspired, and delivers the oracles of the god to his votaries. Yet the cases can hardly be parallel; for now, when you have already drunk more than half the cask, you tell me you are only beginning. Let me see if I cannot find a better illustration. You may keep your cask and your merchant: only we will not fill the cask with wine, but with seeds and grain of all sorts, wheat on top, and below that beans, then barley, and lentils, and peas, and other sorts as well. Now, suppose you come to buy some of the grain, and the seller takes a little of the wheat from the top and puts it in your hand for you to examine as a specimen of the contents of the cask: would you be able to tell by doing so whether the peas were clean, or the lentils tender, or the beans sound?

HERM. No, of course I should not.

LYC. Very well then; you cannot tell what all philosophy is like from hearing the first thing that one philosopher may say about it. For we saw that philosophy is not a homogeneous thing like wine, as you assumed it to be when you spoke of telling what the whole was like by merely tasting it, but something of quite another

kind, and requiring something more than a mere casual scrutiny. You see, if one buys bad wine, the worst that can happen is the waste of a couple of obols, but the danger of perishing among the herd, as you said at first, is a very different risk. Besides, if you insist on drinking the whole cask every time you want to buy a flask of wine, the extraordinary copiousness of your sample will be rather hard on the innkeeper; but nobody is injured in the case of philosophy, for however much you drink, the cask is not exhausted, nor the merchant impoverished, but, as the proverb says, 'the more you draw out the more flows in.' Here you have the exact contrary to the case of the Danaids' sieve, which let all the water they poured in run out, for the more you take out of this the more there is left in it. There is another illustration I should like to suggest—only you must not think I am disparaging philosophy if I say it is like a poisonous drug, such as hemlock or aconite or something of that sort; for, deadly as these are, they will not kill you if you only take a taste of them on the end of your fingernail: if they are to be fatal they must be taken in the necessary quantities, and in the proper way, and with the proper concomitants. Now, your idea was that the very smallest modicum of information would give you a perfect knowledge of the whole.

HERM. Well, have it your own way, Lycinus. But what then? Must we live for centuries and undergo all this toil, or else let philosophy alone altogether?

LYC. Yes, I think we must. And there is nothing surprising in this if the saying you quoted at the beginning of our discussion is true, 'Art is long, but life is fleeting.' So I don't see why you need be so

angry, even if you do not this very day turn into a Chrysippus, or a Plato, or a Pythagoras.

HERM. How you hem me in, Lycinus, and push me into a corner, though I never did you any harm. It is all envy, I do believe, because I have made some progress in learning, and you are ashamed of yourself for having done no more than you have at your age.

LYC. Well, if so, your course is clear. Just treat me as you would some frenzied enthusiast, and leave me to my ravings while you pursue the even tenor of your way and end as you began.

HERM. Well, but you are so violent you won't let me choose anything without trying everything.

LYC. Surely you must see that I could not possibly ever say otherwise. But when you call me violent you seem to me to blame one blameless, as the poet says, seeing that it is I who suffer violence till another argument come to my[1] rescue and deliver me from it. Just see how much more violent is the language of that new argument—yet perhaps you will never notice that it is the argument that speaks, and will blame poor me instead.

HERM. What will it say? I shall be surprised indeed if anything has been left unsaid.

LYC. It says that in order to make the best choice, or even thoroughly to examine everything, something far more than that is required.

HERM. What may that be?

LYC. The critical faculty, my good friend, and the power to discriminate; keenness of intellect, and a mind which is both accurate and unbiassed; these must be brought to bear upon a decision of such importance,

[1] Reading ἕτερός μοι.

or all your investigation will be absolutely useless. So the argument says that if you would accomplish a task like this, you must allow abundance of time, and you must get the claims of all fairly set out before your mind, and make your choice slowly and deliberately, examining each point again and again, paying no regard to the age or appearance or reputed wisdom of each claimant, but doing as the judges of the Areopagus do, who hear cases in the darkness of the night, so that they may fix their regard on the things spoken, rather than on the persons who speak. Then only, when you have placed your choice on this firm basis, you may begin to devote yourself to the practice of philosophy.

HERM. In another life, that is, for at this rate no man on earth can ever live long enough to arrive at that point. For you would have us make trial of every system, examining each one in succession, and after that scrutiny deciding which is best, and after deciding make our selection, and, after making our selection, at last we may start on our course, and in no other way, you say, is true philosophy to be attained.

LYC. I hardly like, Hermotimus, to add that even this is not enough. Still, I am bound to point out that we are unconsciously assuming that we have arrived at some certainty, although we have really done nothing of the kind; just as fishermen often let down their nets, and then, feeling them heavy, they draw them up, thinking they have got a fine haul of fish; yet when, after much labour, they have got them up, they find what they have netted is nothing but a stone, or perhaps an old jar full of sand. I am rather afraid our haul may be something of the same kind.

HERM. I don't know what you mean by your nets—any way, you have got me nicely entangled in them.

LYC. Well, I will try to extricate you: as good luck will have it, you can swim as well as anybody. What I mean is, that though we make the round of all the schools, and do all we have spoken of, it does not seem to me that, even so, we can be certain that any one of them is in possession of the truth we are looking for, or that they are not all equally in the dark.

HERM. Why, what do you mean? One or the other must have it surely.

LYC. That is not certain. Do you not think it possible that all may be wrong, and that the truth may be something which no one of them has ever discovered?

HERM. How could that be?

LYC. In this way. Let us take the number twenty, for instance. Suppose you hold twenty beans in your closed hand, and ask ten people how many beans you have, they will guess one ten, another five, another thirty, or perhaps ten, or fifteen, and so on, one guessing one number, and one another, and possibly some one may chance to give the right number, may he not?

HERM. Of course.

LYC. But is it not also possible that they may all guess wrong, and that not one of them may say that the beans you have got are twenty?

HERM. Yes, that is possible also.

LYC. In the same way, all philosophers are seeking to discover the nature of the chief good, and one says it is one thing, and one says it is another; one says it is Pleasure, and another Virtue; and others say all kinds of different things about it. Now it is possible that the chief good really is one of these things; but, on

the other hand, it is also possible that it is none of them, but something quite outside them all. So we seem to have been putting the cart before the horse, as it were, and hurrying to reach the end before we have discovered the beginning. I think it ought first to be made clear that the truth is known at all, and that any philosopher whatsoever is in possession of it, and after that it is quite time enough to begin searching them all, to find out who that is.

HERM. So that what you mean to say is that, even though we were to toil through every school of philosophy, we might not even then discover the truth?

LYC. Don't ask me, my good man, ask the argument itself again, and perhaps it will tell you that you never will, so long as it is uncertain whether the truth really is the possession of any one of these schools, or not.

HERM. Then, according to you, we never shall find it, or attain to philosophy at all, but live a dull life of ignorance, far apart from her. The only possible inference from what you say is that to be a philosopher is impossible and unattainable, to mortals at least, for you insist that he who desires to become one must first choose the best system; and the choice seems to you to be made with sufficient care only by going right through every one in turn, searching for the best. Then, when you come to reckon up the number of years required to do this, you run on into after generations, going far beyond the limits of any one human life; and finally you discover that, even when this is done, all doubt is not at an end, seeing that it is uncertain whether the truth has ever been discovered by any philosopher at all, or not.

LYC. Well, Hermotimus, could you yourself ever say that it has?

HERM. No, I could not swear to it.

LYC. And yet how many other things have I not purposely passed over, though they, too, need prolonged and careful investigation?

HERM. What are they?

LYC. Have you never heard that among those who profess to be Stoics, or Epicureans, or Platonists, some are really acquainted with the doctrines of their respective schools, and others are not, though in other respects they are entirely trustworthy?

HERM. Yes, I have.

LYC. Then do you not think that it is a heavy undertaking to find out those who know, and distinguish them from those who do not, though they say they do?

HERM. Yes, indeed.

LYC. You see, if you are to find out which is the best of the Stoics, you will have to go round, if not to all, at least to most of them, so as to test them, and choose the best of them as your teacher; and before doing that, you must have trained yourself carefully, and acquired the faculty of discriminating in such matters, so that you may not go and select the very worst of them by mistake. Now, just see what an amount of time this will require. I passed this over purposely before, because I was afraid you would be angry with me if I called your attention to it; but, in my opinion, it is really the most important and necessary thing of all, in an undertaking of this kind, involved, as it is, in obscurity and doubt. This is the only sure and solid ground you can possibly find for your hopes in the search for truth—I mean the faculty of discrimination,

and of sifting out the false from among the true, distinguishing the sound and genuine from the base and counterfeit, as the silver assayers do with coins; and then, when you have at last managed to acquire such a faculty, you may betake yourself to the investigation of the various doctrines. Otherwise, I can assure you, you will be led by the nose by any one who chooses to do it, and you will run after anything they hold out to you, as cattle do after a green bough. You will be exactly like water spilt on a table, which any one can draw in whatever direction he likes with the tip of his finger, or like a reed growing on the river's bank, bending hither or thither with every breath, no matter how faint the breeze may be that shakes it. So, if you can manage to find some teacher who understands the nature of proof, and is skilled in this art of determining disputed points, and able to impart his knowledge to you, then you are at the end of your troubles; for this art of demonstration will be a touch-stone by which the good and true will be made evident and the false detected, so that you can form your opinion, and make your choice without hesitation, and so entering on philosophy, you may at last attain to that much longed for blessedness, and in it live a life of perfect happiness.

HERM. Good! That is a great improvement on all you said before, Lycinus, and there is decidedly some hope in it. We must at once set to work to find a master such as you describe, who will impart to us this critical and discriminative faculty, and, above all, the art of demonstration. When we have once acquired this, it seems the rest will be plain sailing, so no great delay will be involved after all. I really am immensely

grateful to you for having discovered this short cut and excellent road.

LYC. You have no cause to be grateful to me as yet, I assure you, my dear friend. I have shown you nothing that can bring you any nearer; on the contrary, we are further off than ever we were before, and, as the saying goes, "after all our toil we remain where we were."

HERM. What do you mean? You bring back all my misery and despair.

LYC. My dear friend, I mean that even if we could find some one who professed to know this art of proof, and to be able to teach it to others, I think we could hardly take him at his word. We should have to find some other person who was capable of judging whether he spoke the truth or not; and then, supposing we found some one to give an opinion upon that, it would still be uncertain whether our referee was himself able to distinguish between a good judge and a bad one, and we should have to call in a third person to pronounce upon this question, for how could we possibly decide it for ourselves? So you see how the object of our search keeps receding from us, till the task seems absolutely without any limit at all, for we can never bring it to a standstill or overtake it. Even the demonstrations themselves, no matter how many you may find, are questionable and open to doubt. Most of them try to compel our belief in one uncertainty by appealing to another in support of it, others connect the most obscure and doubtful questions with facts which, though obviously true, are entirely irrelevant, and rely on the latter as a proof of the former: as if, for instance, one were to try and demonstrate the

existence of gods by pointing to the altars which have been raised to them. And so, Hermotimus, I am afraid that, like runners going round in a ring, we have got back to the point we started from, and to our original difficulty.

HERM. How cruel you are, Lycinus! showing me that all my treasure is but dust and ashes, and that the long years of labour I have spent on this are lost and wasted.

LYC. My dear friend, you will be less distressed if you consider that you are not the only person who has been disappointed of his hope, but all philosophers are contending as it were for an ass's shadow. Who could possibly go through all the labour I have been speaking of? You yourself pronounced it to be impossible. But now you seem to me like a person who should weep, and upbraid cruel Fortune because he could not climb up into the sky, or dive into the sea from Sicily, and come up again at Cyprus, or take wings to himself and fly in one day from Greece to India; the cause of his sorrow being, I suppose, that by reason of a dream, or the force of his own imagination, he had hoped to do some one of these things, without having stopped to consider whether he was longing for what was possible, and consistent with human nature, or not. So you, too, while dreaming fair and wondrous dreams, have felt the touch of Reason and been startled from your sleep, and you are angry with her because your eyes are scarcely open yet, and you shake sleep off unwillingly, because of the delight you had in your dreams. This is what happens to all those who transport themselves in fancy to the Islands of the Blest. Perhaps they are in the very midst of fancied riches, or digging up

buried treasure, or, it may be, reigning as kings, or otherwise enjoying some of the many pleasures the goddess of wishes easily creates for them (for she is generous, and denies no man, even though he may ask for wings, or colossal stature, or whole mountains of gold); and, just as they are occupied in this way, their servant comes, and asks a question about some every-day necessity, such, for instance, as whence bread is to be got, or what answer is to be made to the landlord, who is demanding his rent, long overdue. Then they get angry with the servant for disturbing them, and snatching all these good things out of their grasp, and are ready to bite his head off. But, pray, my dear friend, do not feel like this towards me, merely because, when I saw you busily engaged in thus digging up buried treasure and flying in the air, cherishing portentous designs, and hoping unattainable hopes, my regard for you was too great to let me leave you to pass all your life in a dream—a pleasant one, perhaps, but a dream nevertheless. Rather I would have you rise from sleep, and set about some practical undertaking which will keep you the rest of your life with your mind bent on realities; for the things which now occupy your time and thoughts differ in no respect from centaurs, chimæras, gorgons, or any other of the fantastic shapes that dreams, or poets, or painters, untrammelled as they are by fact, may have created, but which, nevertheless, never had, and never can have, any existence, though the common people believe in them, and are fascinated by pictures or stories about them, merely because they are strange and unnatural. In the same way, hearing from some marvel-monger that there was a woman of such wondrous beauty as to excel the Graces

and Venus Urania herself, you immediately fell in love with her, without pausing to ascertain the truth of what you heard, or whether there was actually such a woman in the world, or not; just as Medea is said to have fallen in love with Jason in a dream. Now, as I conjecture, the way in which you, and all others who are enamoured of the same vain shadow have been led so far astray is this: the person who told you about this imaginary woman, when he had once gained your confidence, proceeded to embellish his description with further details, seeing that you had your gaze fixed only on her; and in that way he went on leading you by the nose, when you had once let him get a hold of you, and guided you towards the object of your affections by what he declared to be the most direct road. Of course, after you had once committed yourself to him, the rest of his task was easy enough; for not one of you ever looked back to the entrance to see if you were on the right road, and had not unawares entered on the wrong one, but you simply followed in the footsteps of those who had gone before you, as sheep follow their leader, though you should have found out before starting whether this was the road to walk in or not. Perhaps I can make my meaning clearer by putting an imaginary case. Suppose some audacious romancer should tell you that there once was a man with three heads and six hands. Now if you lightly accept this first statement, without considering whether it can possibly be true, he will immediately go on to fill in the appropriate details, such, for instance, as that the man had six eyes, and six ears, and three voices; and that, having three mouths, he could eat and speak at the same time, and that instead

of having ten fingers, as we have on our two hands, he had thirty on his six, and, next, that when he went to war he carried in one hand a Thracian, in another a Persian, and in a third a Greek shield, while the other three hands wielded an axe, a spear, and a sword respectively. You could not refuse to believe these details, for they follow naturally from the original assertion, which you ought to have examined at the outset, to see whether it was worthy of credence or not. If you have once admitted this, the rest flows from it as a matter of course, and it is not easy to draw the line anywhere, or refuse to believe in what follows as a logical consequence of what you have already admitted. And this is exactly what has happened to you, and the others who are in the same case; you were so blinded by love and eagerness, that you never thought of inquiring at the outset what the facts were, but were lured on by the consistent air of what you heard, never stopping to consider that a statement may be perfectly consistent and yet false at the same time, as if, for instance, somebody told you that twice five are seven, and you believed him without counting for yourself; then he could easily go on to persuade you that four times five must be fourteen, and so on as far as he liked. It is the same in geometry; for that remarkable science begins by making certain absurd postulates, and is unable to proceed unless they are accepted—I mean the assumption of such things as indivisible points, and lines without breadth, and that sort of thing—and upon such unsound foundations the whole fabric is reared, and we are asked to accept the conclusions correctly deduced from these false premises. In the same way, you philosophers, through admitting the

postulates of your respective schools, come to believe in the conclusions drawn from them, and you mistake logical consistency for a mark of truth. So some of you die with minds still deluded, never having perceived the truth, or found out those who have misled them; others discover their delusion very late in life, and hesitate to avow it, being ashamed to reverse their course, and confess that at such an age they have all unawares been busying themselves with childish trifles. So shame makes them stay with the rest; they laud their way of life, and try to bring over as many people to it as they can, so that they may not be alone in their misfortune, but have the consolation of seeing numbers of others in the same case with themselves. Moreover, they see clearly enough that, if they were to speak out, they would no longer seem so eminently dignified and superior to other people, nor be treated with the same deference and respect. Accordingly, they are not very likely deliberately to make an announcement which must bring them down from their high place to the level of ordinary people, and you will find few indeed who have the courage bravely to confess that they have been deceived, and to try to deter others from entering on the same course. If ever you find such a person, you may well call him a lover of truth, honest, and just, and, if you like, a philosopher as well. In my opinion, a man like this is the only one who deserves that name; for of the others who claim it, some are ignorant of what they think they know, and the rest, though they know the truth, hide it through cowardice, and shame, and the desire to be looked up to by the rest of the world. But now, if you will, let us dismiss all thought of what I have been saying, and bury it in oblivion, like some

event of ancient history. Let us assume that Stoicism is the true and only philosophy, and then proceed to consider whether its ideal is attainable and possible, or whether to strive after it is to spend labour in vain. I know, of course, that it holds out wonderful inducements, promising unspeakable happiness to those who arrive at perfection, for they only are to have all blessings as their perpetual possession; but when we get beyond that point, you, I think, must know better than I. Will you tell me whether you have ever met with this perfect Stoic who may neither be conquered by pain, nor seduced by pleasure, who is unruffled by anger, superior to envy, and despises wealth—who is, in short, in the enjoyment of serene and perfect felicity, as befits one who is, as it were, the rule and pattern of virtue. No one, of course, who falls short of this in ever so slight a degree can be perfect, however many good qualities he may possess; so it follows that if no such person exists, then no perfect Stoic exists.

HERM. I never saw such a person.

LYC. That is right, Hermotimus; you won't stoop to falsehood. Then what have you to look to in your philosophic career when you see that neither your master, nor yet his master, nor his master's master, even if you go back for ten generations, has attained to perfection, and so to happiness? Of course you cannot assert that it is enough if one comes within a little of true happiness, for this is quite useless: the man who stands close to the door is just as much outside the house, and exposed to the weather, as the man who is at a distance; the only difference is that the one who is close by must feel his exclusion more keenly than the other, for he has a better view of all he is shut out from. And so, will you,

in order to get nearer to perfection—always admitting that even that is possible—will you go on wearing yourself out in labours like these, and let life slip by you unheeded, while you bend under the burden of your toils and vigils? Do you really mean to labour on for at least another twenty years, in order that when you are eighty years of age—always supposing that any one will guarantee you are to live so long—you may still be in the ranks of the nearly happy? Unless, indeed, you think that success is reserved for you alone, though you strive for a goal which many a runner, swifter than you are, has failed to reach before you. However, imagine, if you like, that the goal is attained, and all this happiness within your grasp—what then? What blessing can you then enjoy which would adequately recompense you for all your toil? How much time will be left you to enjoy it in, old man as you will be, past all pleasure, and with one foot in the grave? Unless, indeed, you are training yourself for another life, so that, when you enter on it, you may spend it to the best advantage, through your long preliminary study of the theory of living—just as though a man should make such elaborate preparations for his dinner that death by starvation surprises him in the midst of them. Nay, I believe, you do not even know this, that virtue consists in deeds—I mean in living a life of justice, temperance, and fortitude—on the contrary, you (I mean by you all who are distinguished for their philosophic attainments) neglect all this, and spend your lives in hunting out and constructing miserable formulas and syllogisms and puzzles, and any one who excels in this seems to you to have gained some glorious victory. This, I suppose, is why you admire that old master of yours, because he knows

how to throw those who come to him into perplexity by asking sophistical questions, and can split straws, and quibble, and drive people into a corner. None of you care for the fruit of the tree of knowledge—it is no concern of yours, of course—but you are all much interested in the bark, and your regular occupation, when you meet together, is to pelt each other with its leaves. Do you do anything else, may I ask, Hermotimus, from morning till night?

HERM. No, nothing else—that is just what we do.

LYC. Then is it not fair to say that you drop the substance to grasp at the shadow, and leave the snake's body while you snatch at his skin? or, rather, that you are like a man who should pour water into a mortar and pound it with an iron pestle, all the while thinking he is doing something useful and necessary, not knowing that, though he pound his very arms off, the water remains water still? Let me ask you one thing more. Would you really like to resemble your master in anything but his learning—to be passionate, mean, contentious, and, to be perfectly candid, a votary of pleasure as well—for he is all this, though the world may not suspect it? Why don't you answer, Hermotimus? Shall I repeat what I heard the other day about an elderly professor of philosophy, to whom many of our young men resort for instruction? He was demanding his fee, and getting into a great rage, saying that it was long overdue, and should have been paid sixteen days before, on the last day of the month according to agreement. While he was storming about this, the youth's uncle, who was a plain man and quite unversed in your high studies, called out: 'My good sir, leave off saying you have been so deeply injured

because we have not yet paid for a few empty phrases we have bought from you. What you sold you still possess, and your store of learning is not diminished, whereas the object for which I sent this young man to you is not accomplished; you have by no means improved his character. Why, he carried off my neighbour Eucrates' daughter—a respectable girl—and only escaped punishment for it because the father was poor, and I bought him off with a talent; and, again, only the other day he gave his mother a thrashing because she caught him with the family wine jar hidden under his clothes, carrying it off, I suppose, as his contribution to some festivity. As for his evil and passionate temper, his shamelessness, and impudence, and lying, he is a great deal worse now than he was last year, though I sent him to you to be improved in these respects, and not to learn the nonsense he keeps boring us all with every day at meals—talking about a crocodile seizing a child, and promising to give him back if the father answered I don't know what, or else proving that if it is day it cannot be night, and rubbish of that sort; and sometimes, again, he runs on in fine style with some preposterous farrago about growing horns, or some other nonsense of the kind. Of course, we laugh at all this, especially when he stops his ears and philosophises to himself about habits and states, permanent and temporary, apprehensions, presentations, and a deal more in the same sort of jargon. Then we are informed that God is not in heaven, but pervades everything, sticks, and stones, and animals, and all—even the meanest—and when his mother asks him why he talks such nonsense he laughs in her face, and says, "When I have learned this nonsense thoroughly, I

shall be the only rich man, the only king, all other people will seem no better than slaves and outcasts beside me."' When the uncle had said this, just hear, Hermotimus, what an old wife's answer the sage gave him: 'Don't you think that, if he had not come to me, he would have been a great deal worse than he is? Why, he might have been in the hangman's hands by this time. But now his respect for philosophy curbs him to some extent, and makes him less outrageous towards you, and still in some degree endurable, for he feels a kind of shame when he does anything unworthy of his profession, and of philosophy his teacher. So that I am perfectly justified in exacting my fee, not, indeed, on account of any improvement in him, but on account of the misdeeds from which the awe inspired by philosophy has preserved him, just as nurses say that children should be sent to school, not because they are able to learn anything, but because, while there, they are kept out of mischief. I consider that I have entirely discharged my duty by him, and you are quite welcome to come to-morrow morning, and bring with you any one you like who is acquainted with philosophy, and you will see for yourself how well he can ask and answer questions, and how much he has learned, and how many books he has already read about axioms, syllogisms, perceptions, obligations, and all kinds of other things besides. If he beat his mother, and carried off a girl, what concern is that of mine? It was not his guardian that you made me.' This was the sort of apology that the old gentleman made on behalf of philosophy. Do you think it was an adequate one, Hermotimus, and that we ought to devote ourselves to philosophy in the hope of thereby avoiding the baser

crimes? Had we at first no other hope before us, or did we look on philosophy only as a means whereby we might behave more respectably than those who are without it? Now why don't you answer?

HERM. Because I am almost ready to shed tears, so greatly am I distressed by the truth of all you have said. My grief is intense, when I think of all the time I have spent, and all the money too, to gain only toil in return. I feel like a man just awaking from a drunken sleep, when I see what it is that I have been so long in love with, and what harm and loss I have suffered on account of it.

LYC. Why need you be so unhappy, my dear friend? I think that fable of Æsop's very appropriate to your case—I mean the one which tells how a man sat down on the seashore, at the edge of the water, intending to count the waves; and how, when he got into difficulties over it, he grew vexed and angry, until the fox, who was standing by, said, 'My good man, why do you bother about the waves which have gone past? Let them alone, and count those which are still to come.' So don't you think that, now you have found out your mistake, you had better lead the life of ordinary mortals, and associate with other people, without aiming at anything marvellous or sublime, and not be ashamed, old as you are, to change your way of living, and betake yourself to something better? Pray don't imagine, my dear friend, that anything I have said has been intended as an attack upon your school in particular, or that I am actuated by any special grudge against the Stoics—what I have said applies equally to all schools. I should have said exactly the same thing if you had taken up Platonism

or Aristotelianism, and given judgment against the others by default. As it was Stoicism that you had chosen, my argument naturally seemed to be directed against that school, but I have no more to say against it than against any of the rest.

HERM. You are perfectly right: I will go this very minute, and make myself look another man. You shall not see me going about any more with a long unkempt beard, and denying myself all the joys of life. No, I shall take to a much more easy and comfortable way of living, and perhaps I may even go so far as to wear purple clothes, just to show everybody that I have done with all that nonsense. I only wish I could as easily rid my mind of all the rubbish I have swallowed. I assure you I would not hesitate to drink hellebore (though my motive in doing so would be the reverse of that of Chrysippus) if, by that means, I could forget every word his followers ever said. As for you, Lycinus, I cannot be too grateful to you. You saw me being swept away by a fierce and muddy torrent, and put me on my feet, when I was being carried down stream, appearing suddenly and catching me up into your car, like a god in a tragedy. I think I should do well to shave my head like those who have been saved from shipwreck; for, indeed, I look on myself as having been saved to-day, when so thick a mist has been dispelled from my eyes. As for philosophers, if I should ever by accident meet one in the street, I will get out of his way, and avoid him as I would a mad dog.

THE TRUE HISTORY

BOOK I

THOSE who devote themselves to athletics, and make the care of the body their business, do not pay attention to good health only and the due performance of the appointed exercises, but are no less careful about regular intervals for rest and recreation, for they look upon this as by no means the least important part of their training. In the same way, I think that those who give themselves up to literary pursuits will do well to indulge in a little mental relaxation after their much study, that so they may go back to their labours with minds refreshed and energy renewed. Such persons, I think, would find a suitable form of recreation in the reading of some book which, though written in light and sportive vein, seeks not merely to amuse, but at the same time makes its appeal to the cultivated taste.

The following pages will, I think, be found to afford something of this kind. Their attraction will consist not merely in the extraordinary nature of the subject-matter, or the amusing manner of its treatment, nor even in the audacious variety of the falsehoods told therein with an air of truth and conviction, but rather in the fact that in each of the marvels here narrated there is a veiled allusion—a little caricatured perhaps—to some one or

other of the poets or historians or philosophers of old, who have not refrained from writing down in all seriousness tales of the marvellous and mythical order. I have not actually mentioned their names, because I intended that they should be obvious without my doing so. I may, however, give one or two here. Ctesias, the son of Ctesiochus the Cnidian, wrote a book about India, in which he gave an account of things which he had not only never seen himself, but which he had not even got from other people at second-hand. Iambulus, too, wrote a number of marvellous tales of the sea, which are quite obviously evolved from his own imagination, yet nevertheless decidedly good reading. There has been a number of other writers who have gone upon the same lines, and written what profess to be accounts of their own wanderings and adventures, telling wild stories of huge beasts and savage men and strange fantastic ways of living. The leader and pioneer of this school, who first set the example of this sort of romancing, was Homer's Odysseus, with his tales about the winds held captive in leather bags, and wild men with a single eye and cannibal tastes, his many-headed monsters, and his comrades changed by a potion into swine, and all the other fantastic marvels with which he entertained Alcinous and his simple-minded Phæacians. Now I am in no way inclined to find fault very severely with any of these people, merely on the ground of their telling lies, more especially when I see that the same thing is quite the recognised custom even among professed philosophers; all I wonder at is that they should ever expect these same lies to pass for truth. Now I, too, urged by vanity and the ambition of leaving some performance of my own to the admiration of posterity, wish to show that I am as much at liberty as

any one else to fall back on my own imagination, in default of any adventures to relate. To tell the truth, nothing worth talking about ever happened to me, so I have betaken myself to falsehood; though my way of lying is much more excusable than other people's, because I intend to say one thing which is true, namely, that all the rest is false. By thus anticipating the charge of falsehood by a voluntary confession, I consider that I quite clear myself from all possible blame. I say, then, that I am going to tell of adventures which never happened to me, and things which I never either saw myself or heard of from any one else, things which, moreover, do not exist, nor ever could exist by any possibility whatever. Wherefore I warn all whom it may concern to believe never a word of what I say.

Once upon a time I set forth from the Pillars of Heracles, and shaping my course for the open ocean, I began sailing westward before a favouring wind. The cause which was sending me so far from home was a certain busy restlessness of mind and a longing for novelty, together with a great desire to see what the farther side of ocean might be like, and what manner of men they were who dwelt beyond it. So, to prepare for so venturesome an expedition, I took a great store of provisions, with a plentiful supply of water, and persuaded fifty friends like-minded with myself to cast in their lot with mine. I was careful to provide weapons in abundance for all of us; then, by the offer of great wages, I induced the most skilled of all the steersmen in the place to come along with us; and, last of all, I strengthened my ship, which was but a light coasting vessel, to make her fit for so long and rough a voyage. For a day and a night we sailed before a fair wind, and were not driven

onwards with any great violence so long as land remained in sight; but the next day at sunrise the wind increased, and the sea rose, and great darkness came over the heavens. It was now impossible so much as to shorten sail, so we ran before the gale without attempting to direct our course. For nine-and-seventy days we tossed upon the waves; but on the eightieth the sun shone suddenly forth, and we saw at no great distance an island, high and wooded, round which no breakers roared, for the raging of the storm was now abated. So we brought our ship to anchor there, and, landing on the beach, we lay for a long time on the ground, resting after our manifold hardships. At last, however, we arose and separated ourselves into two bands; thirty to stay and guard the ship, and twenty to come with me, to see what was in the island. When we had gone less than half a mile away from the sea, we saw a brazen pillar standing in a wood, and on it we could see an inscription written in Greek, though in letters faint and worn: 'To this place came Heracles and Dionysus.' Beside it were two footprints; one of them full a hundred feet long, and the other smaller—to my thinking the smaller was the footprint of Dionysus, and the larger that of Heracles. After saluting the sacred monument we went our way, and before we had gone very far we found ourselves on the bank of a river flowing with wine, very like the wine of Chios, and the stream of it was so full and strong that here and there a ship might have sailed upon it. So we felt all the more ready to believe what we had read upon the pillar; seeing that here, before our eyes, we had a clear proof of the presence of Dionysus. I determined to find out from what source this river flowed; so I followed its course far up stream, and there I found no spring, but

many mighty vines, heavy with grapes, and from the root of each the clear wine trickled in transparent drops, and from thence the river took its rise. There were fish in the river in great abundance, which were exactly like wine in colour and taste; indeed, when we ate some we had caught we became quite drunken; and afterwards when we cut some of them up we found they were full of wine-lees. Afterwards we bethought ourselves to mix them with some ordinary water-fish, and so we reduced their too great potency. By and by we found a place where the river was fordable, and, crossing it, we came upon a vine, of all vines surely the most marvellous. For the stocks, where they grew out from the earth, were stout and full of green branches; but all their upper parts were those of women, perfectly formed from the waist up, so that they looked like the pictures of Daphne as she turns into a laurel-tree in the grasp of Apollo. Their fingers were green branches full of grapes, and for hair on their heads they had vine tendrils, and leaves and clusters of grapes. As we came towards them they stretched out their hands to us, greeting us, some in the Lydian, some in the Indian tongue, but the greater number in Greek. Some of us also they kissed; and immediately those who had received their kisses became drunken, and went staggering about. They would by no means allow us to pluck the fruit, however; but if any tried to do so, they shrieked and cried out as though they were hurt. Some of them wanted to embrace us, and two of our comrades consenting thereto, could by no means get free again. For they were held so fast among the tendrils that they grew together, root and branch, with them, and their fingers changed into vine-shoots, so that, entangled in marvellous wise among the branches, they too began to bring forth

the fruit of the vine. So we left them to their fate, and fled to the ship; and when we came to our comrades who had been left behind, we told them of all we had seen, and especially of the fatal embraces of the living vines. Then we took some jars, and after filling them, some with water, and the rest with wine from the river, we spent the night upon the shore close to its banks.

Next morning we put out to sea, and sailed for some time before a gentle breeze; but about mid-day, when the island had now disappeared from view, we were caught by a violent wind which whirled our ship round and round, and lifted her near four hundred miles into the sky, and there she remained suspended in mid-air; not sinking down again upon the sea, but carried onward through the sky by the strong wind that swelled her sails. After seven days and nights of this journey through the air, on the eighth day we beheld a great land ahead, lying in the sky, as it were an island in the sea: it was of the shape of a globe, and shone with a radiant light. Our ship carried us straight to it; so we anchored and went ashore. We could see, on looking round, that the island was cultivated, but we could see nothing that lay beyond it till night came on. As it grew darker we perceived other islands not far away; some larger, some smaller, but all with a surface that looked like fire. Beneath us we could see more land, and on it were cities as well as oceans and rivers, forests and mountains; hence we concluded that it must be our earth. We made up our minds to go farther into the interior; but were soon seized by a company of Vulture Cavalry, as they are called there, whom we met upon the way. These are men who ride upon the backs of mighty vultures, using the birds as we do horses. The vultures are of vast size, and most of them have three heads—how

huge they are may be best told by this, that each of their wings is longer and thicker than the mast of a great ship. These Vulture Cavalry, it seems, are commanded to ride everywhere throughout the land, and if they should find any stranger to bring him to the king; so, finding us, they took us before him too. The king looked at us; and judging, I suppose, from our dress and appearance, said, 'Ye are Greeks, then, strangers, it would seem?' When we told him we were, he asked us, saying, 'How then did ye come hither, passing through so great a space of air?' So we told him everything that had befallen us; and he, in his turn, told us his own history, how that he, too, was a man of our earth, Endymion by name, who of old, as he lay asleep, was carried hither and made king of all the land, which, he said, was that which we see from the earth, and call the moon. 'But be of good cheer,' said he, 'and fear no danger; I will supply all your needs; and if I am successful in the war which now I wage against the dwellers in the sun, your life with me shall be of the happiest.' We asked him who the enemy were, and what had been the cause of strife between them. 'Phaethon,' answered he, 'the king of the Sun-men (for you must know the sun is inhabited no less than the moon) has been waging war against us now for many a day. The beginning of strife was this: I wished to send the most destitute men in my dominions to found a colony in the Morning Star, which then was quite desolate and uninhabited, but Phaethon from envy forbade the founding of this colony, and stopped my people in the midst of their journey thither, meeting them with a body of Ant Cavalry. We were not then prepared to withstand such a force, so we were worsted and withdrew for the time being; but now I am resolved to fight once more, and get my

colony established. If you care to accompany me on the expedition, I will furnish you with vultures from the palace stables, one for each man, and all needful arms besides.' 'Be it so,' I answered, 'since it is your royal pleasure.' So that night we abode with him as his guests; and when we rose up next morning we took our places in the army, for the scouts had brought word that the enemy was approaching. Now the strength of the army was a hundred thousand, not reckoning the baggage-bearers, or the makers of war engines, nor the foot-soldiers and allies from beyond the realm. Of this hundred thousand, eighty thousand belonged to the Vulture Cavalry, and twenty thousand were mounted on Kailwings. The Kailwing is a mighty bird, whose body is covered all over with a thick growth of cabbages instead of feathers, though the quill feathers of the wings were more like lettuces. Next to these were stationed the Millet-Slingers and the Garlic-Men. The king had also allies who came from the Polestar: thirty thousand Flea-Archers and fifty thousand Wind-Riders. Of these, the Flea-Archers are mounted on large fleas, from which also they take their name, and the size of each flea is as great as twelve elephants; but the Wind-Riders fight on foot, and are borne through the air without wings. The manner of their flight is this: their dress is a tunic which reaches to their feet; this they gird about them in such a way that the wind swells it out, and they are carried along by their garments, as ships are by their sails. In battle these people are generally employed as light infantry. It was currently reported that seventy thousand Acorn-Ostriches and five thousand Horse-Cranes were coming from the stars above Cappadocia, but these I did not see, for they never arrived. Wherefore I will not venture to write anything concerning them, for

strange, and indeed wholly incredible, were the things I heard about them. Such, then, was the army of Endymion. The arms of all were alike: each man's helmet was made of a bean (for the beans there are very great and strong), and they wore scale armour made of lupines; for, by sewing the husks of their lupines together, they can make them into breastplates, because the lupines of their country are as hard as horn, and not easily to be broken. Their shields and swords were in nowise different from our own.

It was now time to get ready for battle; and the army was drawn up in the following array. The Vulture Cavalry was on the right wing, and the king was in their midst with a chosen band, ourselves among the number; on the left wing were the Kailwing Cavalry, and in the midst the allies; each force in its order. Of foot-soldiers there were about sixty millions; and the means whereby they took their stand was this. There are in the moon many spiders of vast size—so large that the cyclades are less than they —and these the king commanded to spin their webs through all the space between the moon and the morning star. This they did in a very short time; and on the plain thus made the king drew up his foot-soldiers in battle array, and gave command over them to Nighthawk, the son of Faircalm, and two others.

The enemies' left was held by Phaethon the king and his Ant-Cavalry. These ants are mighty-winged creatures, like the ants on earth in all but their huge size (for the largest of them were as much as two hundred feet in length). Not only did their riders fight, but they themselves assisted with their horns, and of these it was said there were about fifty thousand. On the right wing were drawn up the Gnat-Riders—and of these too there were fifty thousand

—all of them archers riding on huge gnats. After these came the aërial mercenaries, unarmed and on foot, but mighty warriors none the less; for they could hurl monstrous radishes from afar, with slings, and he that was struck by these died immediately from the awful stench which arose from the wound; for they say their radishes were smeared with the poison of mallows. Next to them were the Stalk-and-Toadstool-men—heavily armed foot-soldiers who fight at close quarters—of whom there were about ten thousand. This name of Stalk-and-Toadstool-men they get because they use mushrooms for shields, and asparagus stalks for spears. Beside them stood the Acorn-Dogs, whom the dwellers in the Dog-star had sent to King Phaethon to the number of about five thousand: they were dog-faced men, who fought from the backs of winged acorns. It was said that there were some of Phaethon's allies who came too late; namely, the Slingers who had been sent from the Milky Way, and the Cloud Centaurs. These latter did arrive after the battle was over, however,—would they never had! But the Slingers came never at all, wherefore they say that Phaethon afterward set fire to their city in his wrath. This, then, was the array with which Phaethon came against us. When the standards had been raised, and the donkeys had brayed (for in the Sun and Moon asses are used instead of trumpets), the two armies joined together, and the battle began. The left wing of the Sun-men fled forthwith, not daring to come to close quarters with the Vulture Cavalry, and we pursued them, slaying as we went; but their right wing prevailed over our left, and the Gnat-Riders rushed after our warriors, pursuing them even to where the foot-soldiers were stationed. But when the foot-soldiers came to the rescue they gave way and fled; making the less resistance

because they saw their left wing was already broken. Our victory was a glorious one; we took many prisoners alive; but many, nevertheless, were slain, and the blood fell down in streams upon the clouds, so that they were dyed by it till they were red, even as they seem to us upon the earth when the sun is going down. And much blood, too, fell upon the earth; wherefore I wondered whether it might not have been some olden battle in the skies which made Homer tell how Zeus rained down blood when Sarpedon was slain. So when we came back from pursuing the foe we set up two trophies; one in honour of the victory by the foot-soldiers, upon the Plain of Webs, and the other upon the clouds, in memory of the battle in the air. Yet scarcely had we finished this when our scouts warned us that the Cloud Centaurs were hard upon us (these were they who should have come to Phaethon before the battle). As it was, they were now seen rushing to attack us—a strange and wondrous sight, for they were partly winged horse and partly man, and the stature of the man-part was as that of the upper part of the great Rhodian image, and the horse-part was as big as a mighty ship. The number of them I will not write, forasmuch as I fear none would believe, so great it was; and their leader was the Archer of the Zodiac. When they saw their side was worsted they sent a message to Phaethon, bidding him lead his men once more to the attack, and saying that they themselves would form in battle array and fall upon the disordered hosts of the Moon-men, who were scattered in all directions, some pursuing their foes, and others dividing the spoil. This they did; and chased the king himself back to his own city, and slew most of his birds. They tore down the trophies, and overran the plain, and myself and two of my comrades they took

prisoners. Then Phaethon himself came up; and they set up another trophy on their own account. As for us, we were taken away that very day in captivity to the sun, with our hands tied behind us with a thread from the spiders' webs.

The victors decided not to besiege the city of the Moon; but when they returned home to build a wall in the midst of the heavens, in order that no ray from the Sun should henceforth shine upon the Moon. The wall was a double one of thick clouds; so that the moon suffered a complete eclipse, and lay wrapped in constant night. At last Endymion, crushed by this calamity, sent a message to the Sun, begging of them to remove the wall, and not leave him and his people to drag out the rest of their lives in darkness; promising that they would pay tribute and never again go to war, but be their allies ever after. Phaethon's counsellors met twice to consider this message; and at the first meeting they would in nowise abate their anger, but at the second they changed their minds, and granted peace on the terms that Endymion had offered. This is the treaty that was made between the Sun-men and their allies on the one side, and the Moon-men and their allies on the other:—

'The Sun-men shall take away the wall between themselves and the Moon, and shall make no incursions into the territories of the Moon; and they shall restore all prisoners on terms to be agreed on in each case. The Moon-men, on their part, shall leave the other stars in possession of their independence, and never bear arms against the Sun; but Sun and Moon shall come to each other's assistance if either shall be attacked. And every year the King of the Moon shall pay to the King of the Sun a tribute of ten thousand jars of dew, and give

hostages to the number of ten thousand. Also the colony in the Morning Star shall be founded by Sun and Moon in common, and any one from the other stars who chooses shall be allowed to join it. And this treaty shall be written upon a pillar of amber, and set up in mid-air at the boundary of the two kingdoms.

'Sworn to by Fire-son, and Summer-heat, and Flaming on behalf of the Sun-men; and by Nightly, and Crescent-man, and Glittering for the people of the Moon.'

Thus, then, the peace was made; and immediately the wall was pulled down, and we prisoners were given back. And when we got back to the Moon, our comrades came forth and greeted us with tears, and so, likewise, did Endymion himself. He begged of us to stay with him and join in his colony, promising that he would give me his son in marriage (for there are no women among them). But I would not be persuaded, but begged that he would send us down again to the sea. So, when he saw that he could by no means persuade us, he feasted us for seven days and then let us go.

And now I would fain relate all the strange and wondrous things which I saw during my sojourn in the Moon. In the first place, their children are not born from women, but from men; they are carried before birth in the calf of the leg; and the child, when it first sees the light, has not begun to live, but they lay it in the fresh air with its mouth wide open, and thus it receives the breath of life, Again, when a man grows old, he does not die; but melts away into the air, as smoke does. All eat the same food, which is this: they roast upon coals some of the frogs which fly through the air there in great numbers, and while they are roasting they sit round the fire, as it were round a table, and

regale themselves by inhaling the smoke as it rises, and this is all their food. As for their drink, it is nothing but air, which, being pressed down tight into a cup, produces a sort of dew. Amongst them a bald head is considered a great beauty, and those who have much hair are regarded with disgust (though in comets, on the other hand, it is the long-haired who are admired, as I heard from some people who had travelled in them). They grow beards, however, which reach to a little above the knee. They have no nails on their feet, which are not divided into toes; and each one has a cabbage growing out of his back like a tail—it is always green, and never breaks off, even though they should fall upon it. Their noses produce a sort of bitter honey; and when they work hard or take exercise their whole body sweats with milk to such an extent that cheeses are made of it by adding a few drops of the honey to curdle it. From onions they make a sort of oil which is very bright, and has a sweet scent like myrrh. They have also vines in great abundance, the grapes on which yield water. The stones of these grapes are so like hailstones that my opinion is that when these vines are shaken by the wind, and so the grapes are broken, the stones fall to the earth, and we have a hailstorm. These people use their belly as a sort of wallet, and put anything into it that they choose; it opens and closes at will, and contains no liver or other organs, but is shaggy and hairy inside, so that the young ones, when they feel cold, creep inside it. The rich men among them are clothed in a soft material made of glass; but the poor wear garments of woven bronze, for the country is very rich in this substance, and by pouring water over it they manage to use it just like wool. As for their eyes, I am loath to tell what

they are like, lest any should think I lie, inasmuch as the tale is too incredible—nevertheless I will tell this also. They have eyes which can be taken out; and any one who chooses may take out his own, and be blind until such time as he has occasion to use them, and then he puts them back in their sockets and sees once more. Many who have lost their own eyes can still see by using the eyes of others, and some rich men even have a store of spare eyes laid by. They have ears made of the leaves of plane-trees, except some of them who sprang originally from acorns—these have ears of wood. Moreover, I saw another marvel in the king's palace: there is a great mirror which hangs over a pit of no great depth; now if any man go down into the pit he can hear all that is said among us who are upon the earth, and if he look in the mirror, he can see all cities and peoples as clearly as though he were present at each spot. Therein I saw my own friends and all my native land, though whether they also saw me I am unable to say. And if there be any one who doubts that these things be so, if he himself shall ever go to that place he shall know that I speak the truth.

So then, having bid farewell to the king and his company, we entered into our ship and set forth again. And to me Endymion gave as gifts two of the tunics of glass, and five of the brazen ones, and one suit of the lupine mail (all of which I had afterwards to leave in the whale's belly); and he sent with us a thousand of the Vulture Cavalry to escort us sixty miles on our way. We passed by many other places on our voyage; but at the Morning Star, where the new colony was, we stopped to take in water; then, entering the circle of the Zodiac, we passed the sun on our left, and sailed

very close to its surface. Nevertheless, we did not land there, though many of my comrades desired to do so, because the wind would not permit it. Still, we could clearly see the land, that it was green, and rich, and well watered, and, in short, full of all good things. When the Cloud Centaurs, who were serving in the pay of Phaethon, saw us, they flew up to our ship; but when they found we were under the treaty of peace, they went their way again. Then the Vulture Cavalry departed from us also; and we, sailing all that night and the following day, came toward evening, on our downward voyage, to the place that is called Lychnopolis or Lamp-town. This city lies midway between the Pleiades and the Hyades, but is far lower down than the Zodiac. We disembarked, but found no man there; only a number of lamps running hither and thither and busying themselves in the market-place and about the harbour. Some were small and poverty-stricken-looking, others large and powerful, and shining with a bright and conspicuous light. They have dwellings of their own, and places where they live, and have names, too, even as men have; and we heard them talking amongst themselves. They did us no wrong, but offered us their hospitality, yet so greatly did we fear that not one of us ventured either to eat or to sleep. Their court-house is built in the midst of the city, and there their ruler sits the whole night through and calls them each by his name, and whosoever fails to answer is sentenced to death as a deserter (death with them means being extinguished). And as we stood by, we heard many of the lamps pleading for forgiveness, and telling the causes why they had been behindhand. And there I recognised my own lamp, and I spoke to him, and asked him how things were at home, and he

told me about everything. We stayed there all that night; and the next day we weighed anchor and went our way, which now lay very near the Clouds. And then we saw the city of Cloud-cuckoo-land, and wondered greatly at it; but we could not land there for the adverse wind. However, we heard that Jackdaw, the son of Blackbird, bore rule over the city, and then I remembered the poet Aristophanes, a wise and truth-loving man, whose writings on this subject have been received with senseless incredulity. On the third day after this we could clearly see the ocean, but no land at all save the countries in the air, which by this time looked fiery and shining with exceeding brightness. On the fourth day, towards noon, the breeze slackened; and as it gently died away, we lighted softly down upon the sea. As we felt our ship touch the water we rejoiced exceedingly; and we made a feast such as our resources allowed, and then we jumped into the water, and swam about, for, as it chanced, there was a great calm, and the sea was smooth.

Yet often it falls out that a change for the better is but the forerunner of greater woes to come; and so it was with us. For after we had sailed for but two days in the calm weather, as the third was dawning, suddenly, by the light of the rising sun, we beheld many sea monsters and whales, all vast and huge, but one, the mightiest of all, was about a hundred and eighty miles long. He came on with his mouth agape, upheaving all the sea, and raising a great foam before him as he came, and showing his teeth, which were longer far than the tallest pillars with us, and all sharp as stakes and white as ivory. We took a last farewell of each other, and waited for his coming. In a moment he was upon us, and swallowed us up, ship and all; nevertheless, as he

did not at once close his jaws upon us, the ship slipped unhurt through the openings between his teeth into his inside. When we were once within, at first all was dark, and we could see nothing; but afterwards, when he opened his jaws, we saw a great cavern with level floor and lofty roof, and big enough to hold a city of ten thousand men. In the middle were many small fishes and other creatures, all broken up, and masts of ships and bones of men, and merchandise, and amidst all this were some hills which, as I suppose, were formed from the mud the monster had swallowed in drinking. There was a wood upon this land, and trees of every kind were growing there, and garden stuff as well — in fact, the whole place showed signs of cultivation, and the girth of it was nearly twenty-nine miles. We could see sea-birds too, gulls and halcyons, building their nests in the trees. For a long time we could do nothing but weep bitterly, but afterwards we roused ourselves, and set props under the ship; and then, kindling a fire by rubbing sticks together, we prepared a meal from what was within reach, for there were many fishes of all kinds lying all around us, and we still had some water from the Morning Star. Next day we rose up, and looking through the monster's mouth whenever he chanced to gape, we could see, now land and mountains, and again the sea only, or sometimes islands as well, so it was plain that the beast was careering through every part of the sea.

When we had become in some measure accustomed to our situation, I took with me seven of my comrades, and walked towards the wood, desiring to explore it. Before we had gone a thousand yards, we came upon a temple, which the inscription showed us was dedicated to Poseidon, and not far beyond we found many tombs with monuments

upon them, and hard by a spring of running water. Soon we heard the barking of a dog, and, as we could see smoke rising in the distance, we thought that surely some dwelling must be no great way off. We quickened our steps, and presently we came upon an old man and a youth, who were busily working in a garden plot, digging a channel which should lead the water into the garden. When we saw them we stood still, filled with joy at the sight, and yet withal greatly fearing; and I doubt not their feelings were much the same on seeing us, for they too stood in silence, looking upon us. At last the old man spoke and said, 'Who are ye, strangers? Are ye spirits of the deep, or luckless men like ourselves? For we are men, born and bred on land, yet now dwellers in the sea, and therein we float hither and thither together with this monster that encompasses us. And, in truth, I scarce can say what has befallen us; for though to all appearance we are dead, yet still we feel as though we were alive.' 'We too,' I answered, 'are men, good father, new-comers here, for only yesterday the monster swallowed us up together with our ship, and we have come hither seeking to know what is in the wood, for it seems to us great and thickly grown. And now, methinks, some god has led us here to find you, and know that we are not shut up alone within the monster. But now, pray, tell us of your fate, and who you are, and what mischance has brought you hither.' But he answered that he would neither tell us of himself, nor ask us any questions, till he had set before us such entertainment as he could; and so saying he led us to his dwelling, which was provided with beds and all other furniture sufficient for his needs. He set vegetables before us, with fruit and fish, and poured out wine for us to drink; and then, when we had eaten and drunk enough, he asked

us of our adventures. And I told him all things in order as they had happened to us—about the storm, and our adventures on the island, and our voyage through the air, and the war between the Sun and Moon, and everything, in short, that had befallen us until our descent into the belly of the whale. He was filled with amazement at our tale; and, in his turn, he told us his own story. 'Stranger,' said he, 'I am a Cyprian by birth, whom my business as a merchant called from home, together with my son here, and a number of servants. We set sail for Italy with a great cargo of merchandise of different kinds, which I took with me in a large ship, whose shattered remnants you may have seen lying in the monster's mouth. All went well until we came to Sicily, and there a great storm fell upon us and carried us out into the ocean for the space of three days, and then we fell in with the monster, who swallowed us up, ship and all, and we two alone escaped from death. So we buried our comrades, and raised a shrine to Poseidon, and now we live the life you see, growing our own vegetables, and living on these with fish and fruit. For the wood, as you see, is large, and has vines in it in plenty, which yield very sweet wine, and there is, besides, a spring, which perchance you saw, abounding with water both clear and cold. We make our beds of leaves, and have fuel in plenty for our fire, and we snare the birds that fly into the monster's jaws, and catch living fish by going up into his gills; and there, too, we can bathe whenever we have a mind. There is a lake of salt water not far off, which is between two and three miles round, and filled with every kind of fish, and in that we can swim and sail in a little boat which I have managed to put together. It is now seven-and-twenty years since we were swallowed up; and may be we should bear our

lot contentedly enough, were it not for our neighbours, who are very troublesome and annoying to us, for they are quite unsociable and savage. 'Are there then,' I asked him, 'others who dwell in the whale?' 'Ay, indeed,' said he, 'neighbours in plenty—inhospitable to strangers, and passing strange of shape. In the western part of the wood, towards the tail, there dwelled the Pickled-Fish men —a race which has the eyes of an eel and the head of a stag-beetle—they are fierce and bold and eaters of flesh. Then on the whale's other side, towards his right ribs, live the Triton-Lizards—creatures who are like men from the waist up, but their lower parts are those of lizards—these are the least hateful of all the tribes. On the left are the Crab-handed men, and the Tunny-heads, and these have made a league together. In the central part dwell the Crab-tails and the Flounder-foots—a warlike race, and very flat of foot. In the east, close to the mouth, a great part of the land is desert, owing to the continual washing in of the waves. I hold it, however, on condition of paying to the Flounder-foots a yearly tribute of five hundred oyster shells. Now, therefore, I have told you what this place is like. Do you, for your part, consider well how we may best contend against foes who are so many in number, and how we may manage to live. 'How many,' said I, 'of these strange creatures may there be?' and he answered, 'More than a thousand.' 'And what are their arms?' 'They have none, save the bones of fishes.' 'Well, then, I said, 'it were better to offer battle to them forthwith, seeing that they are weaponless and we are fully armed; and if we can overcome them, we shall dwell in security for the time to come.' So thus it was agreed; and we went on board our ship again, and made preparation for the fight. The pretext was to be the withholding of the

tribute; for the time for paying it was now fully come, and, indeed, the messengers of the Flounder-foots were even then coming to demand it. The old man, therefore, returned them a contemptuous refusal, and drove them away. On this the Flounder-foots and the Crab-tails were mightily enraged, and were the first to attack Scintharus—for so the old man was called—and fell upon him with a mighty tumult. But we had armed ourselves in expectation of the attack, and were awaiting them. We had set an ambush of five-and-twenty men, with orders to wait until the enemy had gone past, and then to dash out upon them. This they did; and falling upon them from behind, began to cut them to pieces; whilst we others, who also numbered five-and-twenty, because Scintharus and his son were with us, came upon them from the front, and joining in the battle, fought as for dear life with might and main. At last we routed them, and pursued them, even to their caves. Of the enemy were slain one hundred and seventy; and we ourselves lost one man, our pilot, who fell pierced through the lungs by the bone of a mullet. So the rest of that day and the following night we spent upon the field of battle, and we set up a trophy with the dry backbone of a dolphin on top. Next day the other tribes heard of the battle, and came to attack us. The Pickled-Fish men were on the right wing, led by Tunnyman; on the left were the Tunny-heads, and in the centre the Crabhands. But the Triton-Lizards took no part in the fray, choosing to cast in their lot with neither party. We advanced to meet them, and when close to the shrine of Poseidon we rushed upon them with loud cries, so that the sound of our shouting was re-echoed from the monster's hollow belly, as from a rocky cavern. We soon put them to flight, for they were unarmed, and pursued them back to the wood, after

which we possessed the land in peace. After a little time they sent heralds to take up the dead and propose a treaty of peace; but we decided to refuse all terms. Next day we advanced against them, and cut them utterly to pieces, all except the Triton-Lizards; for they, when they perceived what had happened, rushed through the gills of the monster, and cast themselves into the sea. But we went back to the land, which was now clear of foes, and dwelt there afterwards in all security, occupying ourselves with gymnastic exercises and hunting, and with cultivating the vines and bringing home the fruit from the trees—in short, we were like men left at large in a mighty prison, with no chance of escape, yet in all comfort. And in this way we passed a year and eight months. But in the ninth month, on the fifth day, about the second opening of the whale's mouth (for, as he did this about once in every hour, we had got to reckon time by it), —about the second opening, then, I say, we suddenly heard a great shouting and tumult, and a noise as of the shouting of orders and the plashing of oars. In great dismay, we crept up into the very mouth of the whale, and standing just within his teeth, we saw the strangest sight of all my eyes have ever beheld—mighty men, full three hundred feet in height, sailing on large islands, which they rowed like galleys. I know full well that my tale sounds incredible, yet, nevertheless, I must tell it. The islands, then, were long, but not very high—perhaps the girth of each of them would be about twelve miles—and on board each of them were about one hundred and twenty men. Some of these were sitting at the sides of the islands, rowing with large cypress-trees, which had all their branches and foliage on, using them like oars. Astern, upon a high platform on the poop, stood one who seemed to be

the steersman, holding a brazen helm more than half a mile long. On the prow about forty of the giants stood fighting, fully armed, and resembling men in every point, except their hair, which was of fire, and blazed fiercely, so that they had no need of helmets. They used no sails; for the wind, blowing upon the abundant forests which were in each island, swelled them like sails, and carried the island wheresoever the steersman would. The rowers had a boatswain over them, who urged them on after the manner customary on large ships. At first we saw two or three islands only, but afterwards about six hundred came in view, and, taking their places, began to fight fiercely. They dashed into each other in great numbers, and many were shattered and sank; others jammed together, and their crews fought furiously, unable to get them apart. The warriors who were stationed in the prows of the vessels showed the greatest zeal and bravery, boarding one another's islands, and dealing death around them, for they took no prisoners and gave no quarter. Instead of iron grappling hooks, they threw out huge cuttle-fish chained together, and they, twining their arms round the trees in the woods, prevented the islands themselves from moving. Meanwhile they kept wounding each other by hurling oysters, each of which would be a waggon load with us, and sponges a hundred feet long. The leader of one side was called Gleaming-Centaur, and of the other Ocean-Bibber. The strife, as it seemed, was about some booty —Ocean-Bibber had driven off a school of dolphins belonging to Gleaming-Centaur. This, together with the names of the commanders on either side, we gathered from the taunts they hurled at one another, and from the frequent shouting of the names of the kings. At last the forces of Gleaming-Centaur were victorious. They had

sunk about one hundred and fifty of the enemies' islands, and captured three of them, together with their crews, while the remainder, backing their islands, had taken to flight. The victors pursued them for some distance; but as it was now toward evening, they turned back to the wrecks, and got possession of most of them, taking away what was left of their own (for at least eighty of their own islands had been sunk). They set up a trophy in honour of their victory, by fixing one of the enemies' islands to a stake and setting it up on our monster's head. They fixed their mooring cables to him also, and spent the night at anchor close to his side, dropping great and mighty anchors made of glass. Next day they offered sacrifice upon the monster; and, when they had buried their dead upon him, they sailed away with joy, singing what we took to be songs of triumph.

Such, then, was the battle of the islands.

BOOK II

As time went on, I began to chafe under the intolerable dulness of our life in the whale's belly, and began to cast about for some means of deliverance from it. Our first idea was to bore a hole in the right-hand wall, and make our way through it; but after we had made a tunnel more than half a mile long, and still found no outlet, we ceased digging, and decided to set fire to the wood, so as to cause the monster to die, for if we could accomplish this, our escape would be easy enough.

Accordingly we set a light to it at the end nearest the tail. For seven days and nights the monster seemed to be in no way troubled by the burning; but on the eighth day we perceived that he was ill at ease, for he began to open his jaws somewhat languidly and to close them again very soon. On the tenth and eleventh days he was clearly dying, and began to give out a foul odour. On the twelfth it occurred to us, for the first time, that if we failed to prop his jaws open while he was gaping, so that he should be unable to shut them again, we were in great danger of being shut up in the carcase, and ourselves perishing with him. So we kept his jaws asunder by propping them with great beams, and got ready our ship, taking in water and as many other necessaries as we could. Scintharus, we decided, was to be our pilot. Next day the monster died; so we got up our ship and dragged her through the opening between the jaws, and then, by fastening ropes to the teeth, we let her down gently into the sea, after which we climbed up on the monster's back, and offered sacrifice to Poseidon. We then encamped beside the trophy, and remained there for three days, because of a dead calm. On the fourth day we sailed away; and as we went we came across many dead bodies of the warriors who had fought from the islands, and measured them, wondering greatly at their stature. For some days we had pleasant and temperate weather for our voyage; but presently a strong north wind arose, bringing bitter cold, so that all the sea was frozen, and that not on the surface only, but even to the depth of four hundred fathoms, so that we were able to get out and run about upon the ice. The wind still continuing till we might no longer endure the cold, we hit upon this device, whereof Scintharus was the author. We dug a very great cave

in the frozen waters, and in it we abode for thirty days, burning fires to warm us, and living upon fish, which we got by digging them out of the ice. When our provisions began to give out, we went our way again. We dragged out our frost-bound ship, and then spreading our sail we glided smoothly and pleasantly over the ice, as though we were sailing through the water. On the fifth day it grew warm again; the ice melted, and we found ourselves once more in the water. After we had sailed about thirty-six miles farther on, we found a small uninhabited island, where we took water in, for our stock was beginning to run low. We also shot two wild bulls there before sailing away. These bulls had their horns, not on the tops of their heads, but below their eyes—where Momus thought horns ought to be. Soon after this we got into a sea, not of water, but of milk, and in it we saw a white island full of vines. The island was, in fact, an enormous cheese, quite firm and compact throughout, as we discovered afterwards by eating of it, and measured three miles around; its vines were covered with grapes, which yielded not wine, but milk when we pressed them, and in the midst of it was a shrine, which, the inscription told us, was dedicated to the Nereid Galatea. So long as we stayed upon the island, the soil itself was our food, and our drink was the milk from the grapes. The ruler of the country was said to be Tyro, the daughter of Salmoneus, to whom Poseidon gave the kingdom after her departure from among men. We remained five days in the island, and on the sixth we weighed anchor again and sailed before a gentle breeze which lightly ruffled the sea, till, on the eighth day, our milky ocean passed into a dark and briny sea of water, on whose surface we beheld men running about in great numbers, like to ourselves in every respect both in

shape and stature, except for the feet, which were of cork; from which circumstance, I suppose, they derive their name of Cork-foots. We were filled with wonder as we beheld how they never sank into the water, but remained always above the waves, as they went their way in all security. Some of them came up to us, and saluted us in Greek, telling us that they were on their way to Corkland, their native country. These accompanied us for some distance, running beside the ship, and then went their own way, after wishing us a pleasant voyage. Soon afterwards several islands came in sight; one of which was Corkland, for which our acquaintances were bound, and which lay close on our left; it was a city built upon a huge cork of circular form. Farther on, and more towards the right, were five large and very lofty islands, with a mighty fire burning upon each of them, and far ahead lay one very broad and low one, which seemed to be at least sixty miles away. As we got near to it a marvellous breeze began to play round us, soft and fragrant like the breezes which, according to Herodotus, are wafted from Arabia the Blest. It was a mingled perfume of rose, narcissus, hyacinth, lily, and violet; of myrrh, and laurel, and vine blossom as well, which charmed us with its sweetness. So, full of delight in these sweet odours, and hoping that after our long toils and woes we were now to meet with some happy adventure, we gradually came close up to the shore. And there we saw many harbours round the island, safe and waveless, and many bright rivers flowing gently into the sea; and beyond were meadows, and woods, and sweet-voiced birds, some singing on the shore, and some in the branches of the trees. A mild and fragrant air was round the land, and gentle breezes rocked the trees with

their breath, so that a sweet and endless melody came softly whispering from the moving branches, like the sound of flutes heard on a lonely moor. Therewith we heard a confused murmur of voices, not rough or tumultuous, but rather like the sounds that float from a banquet-hall—soft strains of flute-playing, mingled with echoes of applause, and of hands gently clapped in time to the music of the flute or harp. Charmed by all these delightful sights and sounds, we put in to land, and there anchored our ship, leaving Scintharus and two of our comrades on board. As we took our way through a flowery meadow, we met the guardians of the island, who immediately chained us with garlands of roses—this is the severest restraint they use—and forthwith led us towards their king. We learned from them, on the way thither, that the land we had come to was called the Island of the Blest, and that its ruler was the Cretan Rhadamanthus. Thus, then, we were brought before him, and our cause stood fourth in the list of those that should be tried. The first cause was that of Ajax, the son of Telamon, concerning whom it was to be decided whether he was to be admitted to the ranks of the Heroes or no. The accusation against him was that he had been mad, and had died by his own hand. At last, after many arguments had been brought forward, Rhadamanthus decided that, for the present, he should be given over to Hippocrates, the Coan physician, to be treated with hellebore, and that after he was of a sound mind again he should be admitted to the banquet of the Blest. The next cause was one which turned on a love affair —Theseus and Menelaus contended concerning Helen, whose wife of the two she was to be. And Rhadamanthus adjudged her to Menelaus, seeing that he had endured many toils and dangers for the sake of that marriage, and

that Theseus had other wives already—the Amazon Antiope, and the daughters of Minos as well. Next came a dispute about precedence between Alexander the son of Philip, and Hannibal the Carthaginian. In this the decision was that Alexander should have the first place, and that a throne should be set for him next to that of Cyrus the Persian. We ourselves came fourth, and Rhadamanthus asked us how it came to pass that we had set foot on that sacred soil while still alive; whereupon we told him all our adventures, in order as they had befallen us. When he had heard them, he bade us retire, and took counsel for a long time with his assessors, and considered our case (there were many assessors sitting with him, one of whom was the Athenian Aristides the Just). So, when he had made up his mind, he gave sentence concerning us. We were to pay the penalty of our curiosity, and abandonment of our home, after our deaths; for the present we were to be suffered to remain on the island for a stated time, and then, after we had shared in the bliss of the Heroes, to depart. The limit of our sojourn there he fixed at seven months. Thereupon the fetters fell from us of their own accord, and we were set free, and led to the city and to the banquet of the Blest. Now the city itself is all of gold, and the wall around it is of emerald, and in it are gates, each made of the trunk of a single cinnamon-tree. The pavement of the city, and all the ground within the wall, is of ivory, and the temples of all the gods are built of beryl, and the altars in them are single stones of amethyst, on which the hecatombs are offered up. Round the city flows a river of the sweetest oil, whose breadth is of a hundred cubits, and its depth fifty; so that a man may swim full easily therein. And the baths there

are great houses of crystal, and they are filled with warm dew instead of water, and heated by fires of cinnamon wood. For clothing they wear the finest cobwebs, of a purple colour, though bodies they have none, but are impalpable and without flesh, having form and appearance only; yet, though thus bodiless, they stand, and move, and think, and speak—in short, it seems as though it were naked souls moving about, clothed in the semblance of the body; for, indeed, without touching them, none could say that the form he saw had no corporeal substance. They were, indeed, like upright shadows, save that they were not black. No man grows old there; but all remain ever at the age they were when first they came. There is no night there, and no brightly shining day; but an endless twilight broods over the land, like the light that comes to us before the rising sun. They know but one season of the year; for spring is always with them, and the only wind that blows is from the west. And all the land is filled with flowers and shrubs of every kind, and shady trees. The vines bear twelve times in the year, and every month the grape harvest is gathered in; but the mulberries and apples and other fruits, they told us, ripened thirteen times, for in the month they call that of Minos they bear two crops instead of one. Round the city are three hundred and sixty-five springs of water, and the like number of honey, and five hundred somewhat smaller springs of sweet-scented oil. They have also seven rivers of milk, and eight of wine. Their banquet is held outside the city, in the plain called the Elysian field—it is a meadow passing fair, and round it stand trees of every kind, thick and casting a pleasant shade on those who recline beneath, and the couch they lie upon is of flowers. The breezes serve their table, and bring them all they lack

save wine alone, whereof they have no need; for all around stand great trees of the clearest crystal, and the fruit of these trees is drinking cups of every shape and size, so that when any of them comes to the banquet, he plucks one or two of the cups and sets them beside him, and they immediately fill with wine, and thus they drink. They wear no garlands; but the nightingales and other singing birds pluck the flowers from the meadows close at hand, and shower them down on them as they flit singing by. And this is the fashion of their anointing: thick clouds take up the perfumed oil from the springs and the river, and they hang over the feast, and when the breezes gently move them they shower it down, as it were a fine soft dew. After the banquet the Blessed take their ease with music and song. They sing mostly the lays of Homer, who is himself among them and shares the feast, sitting next above Odysseus. The bands of singers are made up of youths and maidens, and their leaders, who also sing with them, are Eunomus the Locrian, and Arion of Lesbos, and Anacreon, and Stesichorus (him too I saw among the rest, for he had made his peace with Helen). And when these had made an end of singing, another band came in, of swans, and swallows, and nightingales; and when these also have ended their song, then all the woods take up their strain as the breezes wake their melody among the branches. But the greatest source of enjoyment is this: beside the place of the banquet there are two springs, the one of Laughter and the other of Delight, and from both of these they drink in the beginning of the feast, and so delight and laughter are with them through it all.

Now I must tell of all the famous persons whom I saw among them. First there were all the demigods, and those who fought at Troy, save only the Locrian Ajax—for he,

they told me, suffers for his impiety in the region of the Damned. Of barbarians there were the two kings who bore the name of Cyrus, and Anacharsis the Scythian, and the Thracian Zamolxis, and Numa the Italian; besides these there were Lycurgus the Lacedæmonian, and Phocion and Tellus, the Athenians, and all the Seven Wise Men, except Periander. I saw Socrates also, the son of Sophroniscus, chatting with Nestor and Palamedes; and near them were Hyacinthus the Lacedæmonian, and the Thespian Narcissus, and Hylas, and many other beautiful youths: it seemed that Hyacinthus was the chief favourite of Socrates—at least he talked most to him. Rhadamanthus, they said, was annoyed with the sage, and had threatened to turn him out of the island if he would insist on talking nonsense, and not make an end of his irony and join pleasantly in the feast. Plato was the only philosopher I did not see there—they said he dwelt in the Republic he himself had made, and lived under a constitution and laws of his own framing. However, it was Aristippus and Epicurus who were most highly thought of among them, as being pleasant, and agreeable, and of a convivial disposition. Æsop the Phrygian was there too; he served as a sort of jester to the company. Diogenes of Sinope, I observed, had so utterly changed his character that he had taken the courtesan Lais to wife, and would often get so excited by wine that he would dance and play all manner of tipsy pranks. Of the Stoics not a single one was there: I was told they were still climbing their steep hill of virtue. I heard also that Chrysippus was not to be allowed to come to the island till he had been treated a fourth time with hellebore. As for the Academics, it was said that they were anxious to come, but that they still held back, and

kept their judgment in suspense, for they were not yet quite sure whether such an island existed at all. Besides, I rather think they would hesitate to appear before Rhadamanthus, seeing that they had tried hard to deprive him of his occupation, by doing away with all judgment whatsoever. I heard that quite a number of them had started on the journey, but had been left behind through their sluggishness; and still failing to reach any conclusion, had turned back when already half-way. Those whom I have mentioned were the most important shades whom I saw there. Amongst them Achilles was held in most esteem, and next to him Theseus.

After I had been two or three days in the island I went to see Homer the poet. As both of us had plenty of time, I asked him as many questions as I chose, and amongst them what his birthplace was, telling him that this was a subject greatly discussed among us of the present generation. He said he knew quite well that some said he belonged to Chios, and others to Smyrna, and that quite a number of people felt convinced he was born at Colophon; but that, in point of fact, he was a Babylonian, and that his own people never called him Homer, but always Tigranes. He had got the name of Homer simply because he had once been a hostage among the Greeks, in whose language the word Homer has that meaning. So I went on to ask him about the verses in his poems which the critics had marked as spurious, whether they were so or not, and he said he had written them every one—whence I realised the entire futility of the frigid criticism of Zenodotus and Aristarchus and all that school. When I had satisfied my curiosity on this point, I asked him why it was that he had begun his poem with the word 'wrath,' and he answered that he had done so for no particular reason, but merely

because so it happened to come into his head. Moreover, I wanted to know whether he had really written the Odyssey before the Iliad, as so many people will have it he did, but he said he had not done so. As for his being blind, as people say, I could discern the truth about that for myself, for it was clear that he saw perfectly well, so that I did not need to ask. Very often, when I saw him at leisure, I would do the same thing; going up to him and asking him any question I thought of; and I always found him very ready to answer, especially after his success in the lawsuit. For Thersites had brought an action for libel against him on account of the way he had ridiculed him in the Iliad, but Odysseus had spoken in his defence, and he had come off victorious. About the same time, Pythagoras of Samos arrived at the island: he had undergone seven transmigrations, and had lived the complete life of each animal whose form he had taken, so that his soul had now accomplished all its incarnations. I observed that on the whole of one side he was of gold. It was decided that he should be admitted to the company of the Blest, only at first there was some doubt as to whether he was to be called Pythagoras or Euphorbus. Empedocles presented himself also; he had an unpleasantly sodden appearance, and his body bore all over the traces of fire, but for all his prayers they refused to admit him.

As time went on, the festival came round, which they called the Thanatusia, or Games of the Dead. The judges were Achilles for the fifth time, and Theseus for the seventh. It would be tedious to tell of all the proceedings, so I will only mention a few of the chief events. In the wrestling match, one Carus, a descendant of Heracles, strove with Odysseus for the victor's wreath, and overcame him; there was a boxing match between Areius the

Egyptian, who was buried at Corinth, and Epeius; but the victory remained undecided between them. No prize was offered for pancratiasts, and I now forget who won the foot-race. In the contest for poets, Homer showed himself to be far the better man; but Hesiod was adjudged victor. The prize was, in every case, a crown of peacocks' feathers.

The games were hardly ended when news was brought that those who were suffering punishment in the islands of the Damned had burst their chains, and overpowered their guards, and were now on their way to attack the island. Their leaders were Phalaris of Acragas, Busiris the Egyptian, and Diomedes the Thracian, together with the bands of the robbers Sciron and Sinis, called Pittyocamptes. When Rhadamanthus heard this, he drew up the Heroes in line upon the shore, under the leadership of Achilles, and Theseus, and Ajax Telamon (who was now in his right mind). They joined battle with the invaders, and overcame them, the greatest share of honour falling to Achilles; but Socrates, on the right wing, distinguished himself far more than he did at Delium, for when the foe was advancing he did not take to flight, but kept an unmoved countenance. For this a special reward of valour was afterwards adjudged to him—a large and beautiful pleasure-ground on the outskirts of the city, where he used to discourse to his assembled admirers, and which he called the Academy of the Dead. So all the result of the expedition of the Damned was that they were seized, and put in chains, and sent back again to suffer even heavier punishments than before. Homer wrote an epic on this battle, and gave it to me, when I was leaving, to take back to the land of the living, but this I lost afterwards, along with everything else. The poem began like this:—

'Sing, muse, the glorious field of heroes dead.'

After the battle they roasted beans, as their custom is after success in war; and they celebrated their victory with a triumphal feast. The only one who did not partake was Pythagoras, who sat apart fasting, in deep disgust at the enormity of the roasting of the beans.

Six months of our time had now passed away; and we were in the middle of the seventh, when unexpected trouble arose. Cinyras, the son of Scintharus, a tall well-favoured youth, had for some time been falling in love with Helen, and it was clear that she returned his affection only too warmly. Often during the banquet they would exchange glances and drink to one another, and would rise from the table and walk about the wood together by themselves. Cinyras, urged by his passion, and by the knowledge that she could be his in no other way, had made up his mind to carry her off, and she herself had consented, and suggested that they should go and live in one of the neighbouring islands, such as Corkland or Cheeseland. Some time before this Cinyras had persuaded some of the most venturesome of my comrades to take part in the conspiracy, but to his father he said nothing of his plan, for he well knew that he would prevent him from carrying it out. So when it was night (I was not there myself, for, as it happened, I had fallen asleep in the place of banqueting), they took Helen secretly away, and set sail with all speed. But Menelaus, awaking about midnight, missed his wife, and raised an alarm, and, taking his brother Agamemnon with him, he went to Rhadamanthus the king. Day was by this time beginning to dawn, and the look-out men said they could see the vessel of the fugitives far away in the offing. So Rhadamanthus ordered fifty Heroes to go on board a ship, which was made of a single stalk of asphodel, and give chase to

them. And they, rowing with all their might, came up with them about midday, just as they were entering the Sea of Milk near to Cheeseland, so near had the fugitives come to making their escape. So, fastening the fugitive ship to their own with a cable of roses, they sailed back again, while Helen kept shedding tears and veiled her face in shame. Rhadamanthus first asked Cinyras and his comrades 'Whether any others had been privy to the plot?' They said, 'No one,' so he ordered them to be chained, and sent to the islands of the Damned, after having first received a flogging with mallows. It was also resolved that we should quit the island before the end of our allotted time, and that next day should be our last upon it. Wherefore I lifted up my voice and lamented, weeping for all the delights that I must leave behind to begin my wanderings again. But the Heroes tried to console me, saying that in a few years I should be back among them, even pointing out my future seat, and the couch that should be allotted to me, near to the noblest of them all. And I went to Rhadamanthus and prayed him earnestly that he would tell me of what was to befall me, and to give me directions for my voyage. He said I should one day regain my native land after many wanderings and perils, though the time of my return he would not tell me. But he pointed out to me the islands lying near: they were five in number, and a sixth lay in the far distance, and told me that these were the islands of the Damned. 'I mean the five close by,' said he, 'where you see the fires burning; the sixth, in the distance, is the City of Dreams. Beyond that lies the island of Calypso; but you cannot see it yet. When you have passed by these, you shall come to the great continent which lies on the other side of the world, opposite to that wherein is your home;

there many adventures shall befall you, and you shall pass through many nations, and dwell among strange inhospitable folk, and at last you shall come to your own continent again.' So much he told me. And pulling out of the earth a root of mallow, he gave it to me, telling me to pray to it in the moments of the greatest danger. And he warned me that if I was minded to return to the island, I must never stir the fire with a sword, never eat lupines, and never have a love above eighteen years of age. If I kept these precepts in mind, he said, I might hope to return to the Isle of the Blest. So, then, I began to get ready for the voyage; and when the time was now come, I supped with the Heroes. Next day I went to Homer the poet, and begged of him to write me a few lines to make an inscription, which he did, and I set up a pillar of beryl beside the harbour, and wrote the lines on it. They ran thus—

> 'Of mortals dearest to immortal gods,
> Lucian this isle beheld, and all therein,
> Then, homeward faring, sought his native land.'

I remained that day upon the island; and the following morning started on my voyage. The Heroes accompanied us to the ship, and there Odysseus came up to me, unperceived by Penelope, and slipped a letter into my hand which I was to take to Ogygia, Calypso's Island.

Rhadamanthus sent with me his ferryman Nauplius; so that, if we went ashore at any of the islands, none should seize us, because he could declare to them that we were on a voyage elsewhither. When we had got beyond the sweet-smelling air, immediately a dreadful odour surrounded us, as of bitumen, and sulphur, and pitch, all burning together, and a loathsome smoke of men's

bodies burning, and all the air grew dark and murky, and distilled a pitchy dew. And we heard the sound of scourgings and many moans of men. We passed by all these islands, except one, where we went ashore. It was steep and sheer all round, full of rugged rocks, all parched and dry, and never a tree was there, nor any water. However, we clambered up the precipices and made our way through a most hideous country by a narrow path full of thorns and stakes. When we came to the prison and to the place of torture, we were filled with amazement, so dreadful was the place. The ground was all bristling with swords and stakes, and round it rolled three rivers; one of mud, another of blood, and a third of fire, and this last was vast and impassable—it flowed like water, and had foam upon it like the sea, and there were many fishes therein, some like fire-brands, and others like small burning coals. There is but one narrow entrance between them all, and there Timon the Athenian stood as warden; nevertheless, having Nauplius as our leader, we were admitted, and saw many who were suffering torment. Many were kings, and others were private persons. Some of them I recognised; among them the luckless Cinyras, roasting amidst the smoke. Our conductors told us something of the lives of each, and what offences had brought their punishment upon them. The greatest torment of all was suffered by those who in their lifetime had been liars and had filled their writings with falsehoods; amongst whom I saw Ctesias the Cnidian, and Herodotus and many more besides. When I saw them I comforted myself with good hopes for the future, for I knew that I had written no false or lying word. So then we returned with all speed to our ship; for, indeed, the sight of these horrors was more

than we could bear, and, bidding farewell to our pilot Nauplius, we sailed away.

Soon there appeared the Isle of Dreams, quite close to us, yet all dim and uncertain in its outline—indeed, itself was something like a dream, for, as we approached, it seemed still to recede, and continually retreated as we drew near. Nevertheless we came up to it at last, and sailed into the harbour of sleep, which is close to the ivory gate of the city, where is the temple of the Cock. Late in the afternoon we disembarked; and, as we made our way toward the city, we beheld all manner of dreams in great numbers. But first I will describe the city, because no one else has written about it save Homer only, and his description is in nowise exact.

All round the city stands a wood whose trees are tall poppies and mandragoræ, and in their boughs are a multitude of bats—which are the only winged creatures in the island. A river flows close by the city, which they call the Night Channel, and by the gates are two springs which are called the one 'Unawaking,' and the other 'Night-long.' The wall of the city is high, of many colours, and like a rainbow to look upon. The gates, however, are not two in number, as Homer says, but four. Two of them look towards the Plain of Sloth; one of them of iron, the other of clay; and it is by these, we were told, that the terrifying, and murderous, and cruel dreams go forth. And two look towards the harbour and the sea; one of horn, which was that by which we entered, and the other of ivory. To the right, as one enters the city, stands the Temple of Night; for Night is the deity chiefly worshipped here, together with the Cock, whose temple stands by the harbour, and on the left is the palace of Sleep the King. Sleep rules over

the whole island; but he has appointed two viceroys to act under him—Terror, the son of Vain Imagining, and Purseproud, son of Castle-Builder. In the midst of the market-place is a fountain called Deep Slumber, and beside it are two shrines—one of Delusion, and the other of Truth: there, too, is the holy place and oracle of the city. The interpreter and prophet of the oracles is Antiphon, the expounder of dreams, an honour which was bestowed on him by Sleep. The Dreams themselves resemble each other neither in nature nor in form. Some are tall and pleasant, fair and beautiful to see, others are harsh and short and formless; some seemed golden, others mean and poor; some were winged and prodigious to behold, others decked out, as though for a festal procession, in the guise of gods or kings. Many of them I recognised, having seen them before; and these came up and greeted us as old friends, and took us and put us to sleep, entertaining us brilliantly; for they not only offered us hospitality of the most magnificent description, but promised to make us kings and viceroys. Some even took us to our homes, and showed us our own families, and brought us back the same day. We remained with them thirty days and thirty nights, fast asleep the whole time, and faring sumptuously the while, till at last a great thunderstorm, breaking suddenly over the island, aroused us from our slumbers. We sprang up at once; and when we had victualled our ship, we set sail once more, and after a voyage of three days we came to the island of Ogygia.

We disembarked there; but, before we did so, I broke open the letter that Odysseus had given me, and read the contents. It ran as follows:—'Odysseus to Calypso, greeting. This is to let you know that after I had left

you on the raft which I had built with your assistance, I soon was wrecked; and, barely escaping with my life through the kindness of Leucothea, I came to the land of the Phæacians, who sent me safe back to my own country. And then I overthrew the many suitors of my wife, who were wasting my substance in revels, and slew them all. But afterwards I met my death at the hands of Telegonus, my son, whom Circe bore, and now I dwell in the Island of the Blest, repenting that I ever left my happy life with you, and regretting the immortality that you promised me. Now, therefore, if by any chance I may, I will escape and come to you.' This was all that was in the letter, save that he recommended us to her hospitality. Then, going up a little way from the sea, I found the cave, just as Odysseus had described it, and Calypso in it, spinning wool. I gave her the letter; and when she had read it, she wept bitterly at first, but afterwards she spoke hospitably to us, and entertained us handsomely. She asked us many questions about Odysseus, and about Penelope, whether she really was as beautiful and virtuous as Odysseus used to boast? to which questions we returned such answers as we thought most likely to please her. After supper we went back to our ship and passed the night on board, anchored close to the shore. Next morning we set sail with a somewhat brisk wind; and after we had tossed for two days in a heavy sea, on the third we fell in with the Pumpkin-Pirates. These are a ferocious race of men who live by robbing ships that pass their island. Their vessels are huge pumpkins, at least sixty cubits long, which they make into boats by hollowing them out when they get dry, and taking out the pulp, using reeds for masts, and the leaf of the pumpkin itself for sails. Two

boats' crews of them fell upon us at the same time, and wounded many of our comrades by hurling pumpkin seeds at them. We fought for long without either side getting the mastery; till, about midday, we saw the Nutshell-sailors coming up behind. These and the Pumpkin men were at enmity with one another, as our foes' actions showed us; for, directly they caught sight of the Nutshell-sailors, they thought no more of us, but turned right round and began a fight with them. Meantime we spread our sails and escaped, leaving them to fight it out. Probably the Nutshell men were the victors, for they were in greater strength, having five boats instead of two, and besides, the boats themselves were stronger. They were made of shells, each the half of an empty walnut, and each half shell was fifteen fathoms long. As soon as we were out of their sight we attended to the wounds of our comrades, and from that time forth we were careful to remain armed, seeing that we never knew when we might be attacked. And it was not in vain that we did so; for the sun had not yet gone down when we saw about twenty men coming towards us from a desert island, each mounted on a huge dolphin, and, as it turned out, these, too, were pirates. Their dolphins carried them quite safely through the water; and as they bounded along, they neighed like horses. When they came near us they parted to this side and that, and cast at us dried cuttle-fish and crabs' eyes. But we returned their onset with javelins, and this they were unable to resist, so they turned and fled back to their islands. About midnight, during a spell of calm weather, we accidentally struck against an enormous halcyon's nest, which was more than seven miles in circumference. The halcyon was floating with it, sitting on her eggs, and

was herself nearly as big as the nest, so that as she flew away she nearly swamped the ship with the wind from her wings, and as she fled she uttered a grievous wail. Day was now dawning; so we approached, and looked at the nest. It was like a huge raft built of large trees, and on it were five hundred eggs, each of them larger than a jar such as those they use for Chian wine. It was clear that the chicks within were ready to be hatched, and we could hear them croaking, so we took an axe and broke one of the eggs, and out of it came an unfledged chick, bigger than twenty vultures.

When we had sailed about twenty-four miles after leaving the nest, we beheld some most extraordinary prodigies: the goose, which was the figure-head of our ship, suddenly clapped its wings and cackled out loud; Scintharus, our helmsman, who was perfectly bald, grew a new head of hair again; and, most amazing of all, the mast of our ship sprouted out and began to put forth branches, and to bear fruit at the top—figs and black grapes, not yet ripe. When we saw these things we were naturally struck with terror, and we prayed to the gods to avert any evil which these signs might portend. When we had gone a little more than six miles farther we saw a great wood, heavy and dark with pines and cypress-trees. We supposed, of course, that it was some land that we saw before us, but it turned out to be nothing but deep sea, planted with trees that had no root, though they stood quite motionless and upright, as though floating on the water. When we got close up to the wood and saw how matters stood, we were sorely perplexed, for it was impossible to sail between the trees, seeing that they were close together and interlaced with one another, and yet it was no less impossible to go back. So I

climbed up into the highest tree, to see how far the wood extended beyond where we were. I saw that it continued for six miles, or more, beyond, but that on the farther side the open sea began again. So we thought the best way would be to haul the ship up on top of the trees—they grew thick and close together—and so get across, if we could, to the sea on the other side. This was how we managed it: we fastened a stout cable to the ship, and, when we had climbed up into the trees ourselves, we dragged her up after us with a mighty effort. Then setting her on the topmost branches, we spread our sails to the wind and sailed along, just as though we were in the water, urged onwards by a favouring wind. I could not help thinking of that verse of Antimachus in which he says—

'As o'er the sylvan waters on they came.'

Having thus forced our way across the wood, we reached the open sea at last, and, letting down the ship in the same way as we had raised her, we sailed on through the clear bright water until, suddenly, we found ourselves on the brink of a yawning chasm in the waters, like those which one may see on dry land when the ground is rent by an earthquake. We lowered our sails; but we could not stop the way of the ship, and she drew on and on until she came near to be engulfed. We leaned over, and saw that the abyss was a hundred and twenty miles deep, for the water stood on either side as though cleft asunder, dread and wondrous to behold. But, looking round, we saw, close by on our right hand, a bridge of water which joined the two seas at the surface, and flowed from the one into the other. So we bent to our oars and forced the ship into the bridge, and with much toil and labour we got her

over, and thus, beyond all expectation, we were saved. From thence we sailed through smiling seas till we came to an island of no great size, easy of access, and inhabited by a race of wild men called the Ox-heads, who had horns just as the Minotaur with us is fabled to have had. We landed there, and went inland for a little way, in search of water and to try if, by any means, we might get provisions, for our stock had now run out. We found water quite close by; but could see no signs of anything else, though we could hear the lowing of many oxen at no great distance from us. We thought this must be some herd of cattle, so we went a little farther on and came upon the men, who, immediately they caught sight of us, rushed after us and seized three of our comrades. The rest of us fled and got back to the ship; and then we all armed ourselves, for we did not mean to leave our comrades unavenged. We returned, just as the Ox-heads were dividing the flesh of our ill-fated friends, and we fell on them with a loud shout and put them to flight. We slew about thirty of them, and took two alive, and these we brought back with us as prisoners. We had found nothing in the way of food, however, and my comrades were for slaughtering the prisoners; but I would have none of this, and put them in chains till the Ox-heads should send envoys to treat for their ransom. This they did; begging humbly for their release, as we understood by their submissive gestures and their mournful lowing. For ransom, they offered us cheeses in abundance, and dried fish and onions, as well as four three-footed hinds, each having a pair of hind legs like other beasts, but with fore-legs grown together into a single limb. So we gave back the prisoners in exchange for these things, and after staying one day at the island we set sail again. After

a while we noticed fish swimming round the ship, and birds flitting about, and other signs of our being close to some land. Soon we perceived men sailing in the water, after a new fashion, by means of a sail fastened round their bodies. They hold the rope in their hands, and so are driven onward by the wind. After these came others, sitting upon large corks, each drawn by a pair of dolphins which they had yoked to the corks and drove like horses. These people did not try to hurt us, nor did they flee from us, but came up without fear and quite peaceably—amazed at the strange fashion of our ship, and examining it on all sides. When it was now nearly evening we came to a small island, which was inhabited by women—as we took them to be—who spoke the Greek tongue, and came to meet us, holding out their hands in welcome. They were adorned after the manner of courtesans—all were fair and young, and wore long trailing garments. The name of the island is Cabalusa, and the city is called Hydramardia. Each of the women led one of our company away with her, and offered him her hospitality. However, I felt some misgiving, and augured no good issue of all this, especially when, on looking around me narrowly, I saw many bones and skulls of men lying on the ground. Yet to raise an alarm and summon my comrades I judged not prudent, so I pulled out the mallow of Rhadamanthus, and prayed earnestly for deliverance from our present peril. Soon after this, as my hostess was waiting on me, I saw beneath her robe, not the foot of a woman, but the hoof of an ass; so drawing my sword, I seized her, and questioned her about the whole of her company, and at last she told me (though sorely against her will) that they were a race of sea-women, called the Donkey-foots, who lived upon the flesh of any strangers

who visited the isle. 'We make them drunken first,' she said, 'and then put them to bed, and when they are asleep we set upon them and slay them.' So, when I had heard this, I left her there fast bound, and going up on to the roof I cried aloud to my comrades, and called them together. When they had assembled, I told them what I had heard, and showed them the bones and led them in to my prisoner. Immediately she turned herself into water, and became invisible, but nevertheless I ran my sword into the water to make trial of it, and immediately the water turned into blood. So we made all haste to the ship, and sailed away. When day began to dawn, we saw a continent before us, which we thought must be the one which lies opposite our own on the other side of the world. So when we had offered up prayers and adoration we took counsel concerning the future, what we should do. Some were for disembarking for a short time only, and then turning back; others wished to leave the ship behind, and penetrate into the interior to see what the inhabitants were like. Whilst we were there debating, a mighty hurricane swooped down upon us, and dashed our ship upon the shore so violently that it was utterly shattered, and we ourselves with difficulty escaped by swimming to land, each seizing his arms and anything else he could carry.

Such, then, were the adventures that befell us on our voyage to that continent, by sea and by land, in the air and in the whale's belly, and, after we got out of it, amongst the Heroes and the Dreams, and last of all among the Ox-heads and the Donkey-foots. But as for our adventures on the strange continent itself, I will tell of them in another book.

ALEXANDER; OR, THE FALSE PROPHET

PERHAPS, my dear Celsus, you were under the impression that you were setting me quite a light and easy task when you suggested that I should send you an account of the life of Alexander of Abonotichus, the magician, which should give an idea of the boldness and effrontery of the man, and the devices by which he carried out his impostures. But, on the contrary, the truth is, that such an account, if it were to be at all exact or exhaustive, would be almost as great an undertaking as a life of Alexander, the son of Philip of Macedon; for our Alexander was no less remarkable for the infamy of his character than his great namesake was for his heroism. However, if you will promise to be an indulgent reader and make up your mind beforehand to find many deficiencies in my work, I will undertake the task at your desire, and try to clear out this Augean stable, if not thoroughly, at least to the best of my ability. Some basketfuls of the refuse I will bring out for your inspection, so that you may see how vast and indescribable is the accumulation of filth which has gathered during the many years in which three thousand oxen have been housed in it. I must confess, however, that I feel a little shame, both on your account and on my own,—on yours who propose thus to perpetuate the memory of a thrice accursed wretch by committing his doings to writing, and on my own, who am devoting myself to the task of

recording the deeds of a scoundrel who, so far from deserving to occupy the attention of persons of culture, was only fit to afford a spectacle for the mob, by being torn to pieces by monkeys and foxes in some monstrous amphitheatre. However, if any one should reproach us with this, we can plead a distinguished example in our excuse—that of no less a person than Arrian, the disciple of Epictetus, a man most highly esteemed among the Romans, and whose whole life was devoted to literature, yet who is open to the same reproof, seeing that he did not scorn to write the life of Tilliborus the brigand. Our brigand, however, was a more ferocious one than Tilliborus, inasmuch as populous cities rather than forests or mountains were the scene of his depredations; it was not Mysia or Mount Ida that he overran, nor the deserts of Asia that he plundered, but he made himself the scourge of nearly the whole Roman Empire.

I will try, in the first place, to give you a sketch of the man himself, making the likeness as vivid as I can, though I have few pretensions to skill in painting. To begin, then, with the outward man. He was tall and handsome, and had, one might almost say, a godlike air; his skin was fair; his beard not too full; and, though his hair was not all his own, the false locks were so skilfully matched and blended with the real that most people never noticed that he wore them. His eyes shone with the dreadful fire which speaks the presence of divinity; his voice was musical and extremely clear; in short, as far as outward gifts and graces go, no fault could possibly be found with him. But as for his mind and character—I pray Heaven it may be my lot to fall into the hands of the enemy, or my own most bitter foe, rather than have to do with such a wretch as he! His mental endowments were extraordinary; in

accuracy and keenness of intellect he far surpassed all other men; his activity of mind, his quickness of apprehension, his memory, and, in short, his natural aptitude for acquiring knowledge, were all in the highest degree remarkable. Yet he put all these gifts to the worst possible use; and all he did with the noble instruments at his command was to turn himself as speedily as might be into a most finished scoundrel. In his villainy he far excelled all those whose vices have made them everywhere notorious —the Kerkopes of old, a Eurybates, a Phyondas, an Aristodemus, or a Sostratus he left far behind. Once, in a letter to his son-in-law Rutilianus, he compared himself, with great modesty, to Pythagoras. But with all respect to Pythagoras—a sage of godlike wisdom—let me tell you that, had he lived at the same time as Alexander, he would have seemed a mere baby beside him. Now pray, for Heaven's sake, do not imagine that I am saying this with any wish to insult Pythagoras, or that I link his name with Alexander's on account of any similarity between the characters of the two men. What I mean is, that if any one were to collect all the worst and most calumnious accusations ever brought against Pythagoras—accusations to which I myself would not listen for a moment—that the whole sum of them would amount to but the smallest fraction of the iniquity of which Alexander was capable. Pray try and form a mental picture of a character compounded of every sort of falsehood and craftiness, of perjury, and all kinds of corrupt practices, unscrupulous, impudent, reckless, untiring in the execution of projects formed, persuasive, plausible; a man skilled to counterfeit the good and to seem to aim at whatever is most contrary to his real wishes. No one, certainly, meeting with Alexander for the first time, could fail to carry away the

impression that he was the most excellent and virtuous of men, as well as the most straightforward and unaffected. Moreover, he was always magnificent in his ideas; his schemes were never on a paltry scale, but always connected with some vast and ambitious project. In his youth he must have been extremely beautiful, to judge by the good looks still remaining to him, as well as by the descriptions given by those who had known him; but he had been no less remarkable for his profligate character than for his personal attractions. One of the persons who took a fancy to him at that time was a certain sorcerer—one of those people whose business is to furnish charms and magic spells, philtres for lovers, incantations against enemies, or witchcraft for the discovery of treasure or the inheriting of fortunes. This charlatan saw that the handsome youth was very ready to adopt his own profession (for its wickedness had as much attraction for him as his own youth and good looks had for the wizard), and accordingly he made him his pupil, and instructed him in all the mysteries of his art, in which he made use of him as a sort of assistant or acolyte. This man's ostensible calling was that of a physician; like the wife of Thoon the Egyptian, he thoroughly well understood how to mix his potions with 'many a healing, many a hurtful drug,' and Alexander eventually became heir both to his secrets and to his practice. This excellent preceptor was a native of Thyana, a disciple and fellow-countryman of the notorious Apollonius, and familiar with the whole stage business of his master's magic. You will see, from all this, to what school the subject of our biography belonged. When Alexander had now grown to manhood he was somewhat at a loss for a livelihood, because his master was dead, and the good looks which had hitherto made him a favourite of the

wealthy were now on the wane. However, his ambition never flagged; he entered into partnership with a certain choric song-writer of Byzantium, one of the kind who take part in contests in the arena, and a still greater scamp than himself—Cocconas was his name, I think—and the couple went touring about together, conjuring and juggling, and fleecing simple folk or fat-heads, as they are called in the professional jargon of such charlatans. In one of these tours they discovered a rich lady of Macedonia, who, though no longer young, was still anxious to be thought attractive, and, finding in her an easy prey, they lived comfortably upon her, and travelled in her train from Bithynia to Macedonia. Her native place was Pella, a city which, though flourishing and prosperous in the time of the Macedonian kings, has now but a scanty and poor population, all of whom belong to the lower classes. In this place they found a great number of snakes, which, though very large, were so gentle and tame that they would eat out of the hands of women, and sleep with children, and never grew angry even though teased or trodden on, and used to suck milk just as infants do. These tame snakes were found in great abundance at Pella, and in this fact is probably to be found the origin of the story of Olympias and the snake—I have no doubt it was one of these creatures which used to sleep with her before the birth of Alexander. One of the finest of these reptiles our friends purchased for a few obols, and this, as Thucydides would say, was the starting-point of the campaign. These two bold and absolutely unscrupulous scamps laid their heads together with evil intent; and it is not surprising that they should have seen clearly enough that human life lies wholly under the dominion of two powers, Hope and Fear, and that any one who has skill to seize his opportunity

to turn one or other of these to account, is certain to grow speedily rich. They saw, too, that both by him who hopes and by him who fears, knowledge of the future is of all things most earnestly desired, and that it was for this reason that Delphi and Delos, Claros and Branchidæ, had become rich and famous of old; because these same tyrants, Hope and Fear, urged men continually to frequent the temples in their desire to lift the veil of the future, and for this cause to offer up hecatombs and dedicate whole bricks of gold. So, after turning over all these facts in their minds, and discussing them together, they decided to establish an oracle; feeling sure that this, if successful, would make their fortunes at once. The event, as we shall see, fulfilled this expectation to a degree that surpassed even their most extravagant hopes. They next turned their attention to the selection of a suitable scene for their operations, and to settling how, and in what way, their enterprise could best be started. Cocconas was of opinion that Chalcedon would be a promising place in which to plant the new oracle, as it was a commercial city, in convenient proximity to Thrace and Bithynia, and not too far from Galatia and the parts of Asia lying beyond. Alexander, on the contrary, was inclined to select his own neighbourhood, saying, very truly, that an enterprise of this sort stood the best chance of success if started among stupid, silly folks, such as he considered the Paphlagonians of Abonotichus to be. Moreover, he said that they were wealthy, and so superstitious that a juggler, with a flute or cymbal-player in tow, has but to appear among them and tell fortunes with a sieve, as the saying is, and they stand open-mouthed as though gazing on some visitant from beyond the spheres. After some slight contention on this point, they finally adopted the suggestion of Cocconas,

and betook themselves to Chalcedon; for it struck them that there was something about the place which might be turned to advantage; and there, in the Temple of Apollo (the most ancient in the place), they buried certain tablets of bronze, which announced that Asclepius and his father Apollo would shortly come to Pontus and make their abode at Abonotichus. The citizens of that place promptly voted the erection of a temple, and began digging its foundations without delay. Cocconas remained behind at Chalcedon, composing some ambiguous and obscure verses for the use of the future oracle; but, after a short time, his career was brought to a close, by the bite, I believe, of a viper.

Alexander, however, had gone on before, and now made his appearance in his native city; his long hair flowing in graceful locks; wearing a tunic of white and purple, and over it a cloak of white; and carrying a scimitar after the fashion of Perseus, from whom he professed to be descended on his mother's side. Those wretched Paphlagonians, though they knew perfectly well that both his parents were people of the most obscure and lowly station, actually believed in the oracle which said—

> 'Favourite of Phœbus, sprung from Perseus line,
> Lo, Alexander comes, the seer divine,
> Great Podalirius' son.'

Truly Podalirius must have been of an amatory disposition, and astonishingly fond of women, if he really came all the way from Tricca to Paphlagonia after Alexander's mother.

Next, another prophecy was unearthed, which was supposed to have been given by some sibyl—

'Near to Sinope's city, and the shore
Of that dread ocean men Euxinus name,
At Tyrsis shall appear th' Ausonian sage,
Whose name of saving import stands revealed
By number's mystic power; which wouldst thou know,
One shalt thou take, and ten thrice told, then five
And thrice a score shall round the cryptic square.'

Alexander, then, returning to his native city, after long absence, with all this pomp and solemnity, contrived to make himself the observed of all observers, and the hero of the hour. One of his tricks was to feign an attack of prophetic frenzy by foaming at the mouth; an effect which he produced easily enough by simply chewing the root of the soap-wort; to his audience, however, the resulting foam was an object of dread and holy awe. Moreover, he had in readiness a serpent's head which he and Cocconas had manufactured some time before. It was made of linen rags, and had a face fashioned in some degree in human likeness, cleverly painted with the colours of life; its mouth could be opened or closed by means of a horsehair attachment, and from it protruded a serpent's tongue—black and forked—which was also worked by means of horsehair strings. As for the serpent they had bought at Pella, the scamp was keeping it carefully at home with a view to producing it at the appropriate moment, when he intended it to play its part in his solemn farce—in which, indeed, it was to be the principal actor.

It was now time for him to start the performance; and he opened the proceedings by the following contrivance. First, he went at dead of night to the newly-dug foundations of the future temple, in which a quantity of water had collected—partly drainage from the soil and partly rain-water. There he secreted a goose's egg, inside which he

had confined a newly hatched snake after emptying the contents of the egg; this he imbedded carefully in the mud, and then betook himself home again. Next morning early he rushed wildly into the market-place, all naked save for a golden girdle round his middle, and the famous scimitar in his hand. Shaking his long, dishevelled locks frantically to and fro, as the votaries of Cybele do when they crowd round the Great Mother in pious frenzy, he sprang up on a high altar, and delivered a harangue wherein he congratulated the city, which, he said, was now on the point of being blest with the visible presence of the god. Meanwhile the whole town—old men, and women, and children, and all—had rushed to the spot; and the entire crowd stood lost in wonderment, offering up prayers and adoration while he solemnly uttered a string of unintelligible words which might have been Hebrew or Phœnician, thereby striking awe into the souls of his audience, who did not understand a single word, except that he seemed frequently to bring in the names of Apollo and Asclepius. Next, he betook himself at the top of his speed to the site of the new temple; and when he got to the excavations and to the fountain which was being built for the future oracle, he went into the water singing hymns to Apollo and Asclepius with all the power of his lungs, and called upon the god graciously to vouchsafe his presence to the city. Next, he asked for a libation-vessel; and when somebody had given him one, he promptly put it under the water, and brought to light the egg in which he had concealed the god (he had stopped the hole by which he put him in with wax and white lead), and with it a quantity of water and mud. This he took in his hands, and told the people that he there held the god Asclepius. And they continued gazing and wondering what was to happen next; for they

were already much astounded by the finding of the egg in the water. When he had crushed the egg in the hollow of his hand, and the people saw the little snake moving and twining itself round his fingers, they shouted aloud and cried out greetings to the god and congratulations to the city—all praying open-mouthed, full of petitions for treasure, and riches, and health, and all other blessings. But Alexander ran home as fast as he could, carrying with him the new-born Asclepius, who thus entered the world a second time, unlike other people who are content to be born once, born this time neither of the fair Coronis, nor indeed of any crow, but of an ordinary barn-door goose. And all the people followed after—all in a state of religious frenzy, and crazy with extravagant hopes. He stayed at home for a day or two, hoping that the rumours of these wonders would bring all the Paphlagonians running from far and near, and the event showed he had not miscalculated. He waited till the city was full to overflowing with creatures absolutely devoid of brains or intelligence, and differing from a flock of sheep in no respect, save that their outward form was that of human beings. Then he went into a little room; and sitting down, gorgeously arrayed, upon a couch, he took the Asclepius he had brought from Pella (which, as I said before, was remarkably large and handsome), and, twining one end of the creature completely round his neck, he let the other hang down outside his clothes, for it was so long that though one end was in his bosom, the other dragged upon the ground. The real head he kept concealed under his arm, for the creature submitted patiently to everything, but he let the linen one I spoke of before peep out from beneath his beard, so as to make the spectators take it for part of the serpent whose body they could all see. Just imagine the scene—a small badly lighted room, crowded

with men wild with excitement and agitation, stupefied with wonder, and dazzled by hope, to whom the sight that met them as they entered naturally seemed a perfect miracle; the tiny snake of a few days ago grown into so huge a serpent, so tame and friendly, and with a human countenance to boot. Then, too, they were being steadily pushed on towards the door; and before they had time to observe anything closely, they found themselves outside, thrust out by the multitude who kept pressing forward from the entrance. A door of exit had been made in the wall opposite to that they had come in by; such as the Macedonians made in Babylon when Alexander the Great lay sick and ready to die, and all the multitudes around were anxious to see him and take their last farewell. It is said that the scoundrel went through this performance not once only, but several times, especially when any rich strangers were among the arrivals in the city. But really, my dear Celsus, to speak quite frankly, I think some excuse may be found for thick-headed and ignorant folks like the Paphlagonians and dwellers on the Black Sea, if they were taken in after they had actually touched the serpent with their hands (for Alexander allowed any one to do this who chose), and seen the head in the dim light, opening and shutting its mouth. Indeed, it would have needed a Democritus, or an Epicurus, or a Metrodorus, or some one with as hard a head, to be proof against so ingenious a contrivance, and discover its real nature, or, if that were impossible, at least to conclude that, though the exact nature of the trick was unknown to him, yet that the whole thing was a deception of some kind, and could not possibly be real.

Well, then, it was not long before all Bithynia and Galatia and Thrace had collected to view the prodigy; for,

of course, each one of those who spread the news said that he had seen the god born, and a few days afterwards had touched him, now grown to a prodigious size, and having a face like a man. Next followed innumerable portraits of the god—both pictures and statues—in bronze and silver; and, finally, he received a name, and was called Glycon, in obedience to a divine command given in verse, and proclaimed by Alexander—

> 'Glycon my name, from Zeus the third,
> Behold the light of men.'

The time had now come when Alexander considered he could start the great undertaking to which all these performances were mere preliminaries, namely, the founding of an oracle by which he should deliver prophetic responses to all comers, taking his cue from Amphilochus, who, after his father Amphiaraus had ended his course by disappearing beneath the earth at Thebes, was banished from his home and went to Cilicia, where he made a very good thing out of foretelling the future to the Cilicians for a fee of two obols for each prophecy. Accordingly, Alexander, acting on the hint thus obtained, announced to all present that, on a certain day, the god would proceed to deliver oracles. He commanded that each man should write in a scroll what he most longed for, or what he most wanted to know, and tie it securely with thread and fasten it with wax, saying that he himself would take the scrolls and proceed with them to the sanctuary (for by this time the new temple had been erected and the scene of operations was quite ready), then, after that, he said he would summon them by a herald or messenger of the deity in their order as they had given in their scrolls; and, after hearing what the god had to say, he would give back to each man his scroll, all

sealed just as it was, but with the answer of Glycon written beneath the question, in the verses in which the god answered all questions addressed to him. Now, of course, to a man like you, or, if I may be allowed to say so, like myself, such a device would be transparent enough, and easily detected, but to these ignorant and stupid folk it seemed a wonder indeed, and an incredible marvel. Alexander, of course, was familiar with several ways of unfastening seals; so he read the questions and gave what answer he chose to each, and then, fastening the scrolls and sealing them down again, he gave them back, to the infinite amazement of the recipients, who kept saying over and over, 'How could he possibly read what I gave him, so carefully fastened with a seal he could never imitate, if Glycon be not really a god and acquainted with everything?'

Perhaps you will ask me what these different ways of unfastening seals may be. I will tell you, and then you will be able to detect such practices. Well, then, my dear Celsus, the first is to heat a needle in the fire, and cut off the seal by melting the wax underneath it; then, after reading the letter, the wax is warmed again with the needle, and the lower part, which holds the thread, and the upper part, which bears the seal, are easily joined together. Another way is to use what is called collyrium, a preparation of Bryttian pitch, bitumen, and powdered crystal, mixed with wax and mastie. Having prepared the collyrium, he warms it at the fire, and, after anointing it with grease, he applies the seal, of which he thus obtains an impression. Then, as soon as this hardens, he opens the scroll and reads it at leisure, after which he puts on fresh wax and seals it with his collyrium seal, which is as clear as though cut in a gem, and gives an impression quite

indistinguishable from the original. I may tell you also of a third method: he would mix together gypsum and glue such as is used in bookbinding, so as to make a sort of waxy paste, and applying this to the wax, he would take an impression which he could use as a seal, for this mixture dries at once and becomes harder than horn or even iron. There is, besides, quite a number of other tricks which are employed for the same purpose, but I need not detain you with a description of them; especially as in your own most elegant and instructive book against sorcery—a work which no one, surely, could read without having his eyes opened—you have exhaustively discussed this form of imposture, and brought forward a very much greater number of examples.

Our friend, then, proceeded steadily with his business of oracle and prophet, in which he certainly displayed much intelligence, and was careful to regulate his inventiveness by considerations of probability. To some of his votaries he returned obscure and ambiguous answers; to others, again, he gave replies which were wholly unintelligible, for this he looked on as imparting the correct oracular tone to his responses. Some he would turn away from their purposes; others he would encourage to persevere, on mere conjecture, and just as seemed best to himself, while to others he would prescribe medical treatment and diet; for, as I mentioned before, he had a good knowledge of medicine, and was acquainted with many useful drugs. The remedy in most favour with him was cytmis, a name he gave to a sort of restorative ointment made from goats' grease. As for those who came to him with aspirations after wealth and prosperity, inheritances, and such like, he invariably put them off to some other time; putting into the mouth of the god some words like this: 'All this shall be one day when it shall be my will, and Alexander, my prophet, shall

make prayers and intercessions for you.' The fee which he exacted for each answer was one drachma and two obols; but, pray, my dear friend, do not imagine, because this was a trifling sum, that the income he derived from the business was a trifling one: on the contrary, it amounted to something like seventy or eighty thousand drachmæ a year; for so insatiable were the people, that they would send in, perhaps, ten or fifteen questions at a time. He was not able to pocket all the profits of the oracle, however, nor to put by much in the way of capital, for he was obliged to maintain a large staff of assistants and servants; including spies, persons to write the oracles, and others to register them; amanuenses, assistants to see to the business of the seals, and interpreters of the oracles when given; to all of whom, of course, he had to give suitable wages. He had, moreover, begun to send emissaries to foreign countries with a view to spreading the fame of the oracle amongst other nations: they were to describe how the oracle was able to foretell the future, how it could discover runaways, and bring robbers to judgment, and treasures to light; how it had healed the sick, and even, in one or two cases, had raised the dead. Of course, such rumours as these naturally brought people flocking in throngs from all parts of the world, and sacrifices and oblations were offered in increasing numbers. The prophet and disciple of the god came in for a twofold share, for he had been careful to disseminate an oracle in the following terms:—

> 'Honour my servant; shower your gifts on him,
> Not mine own gain, but his, my heart holds dear.'

At last, however, a few of the more intelligent sort, awaking to reason as from a fit of drunkenness, began to

unite in opposing him; amongst whom the chief were the Epicureans, who being very numerous, took the lead. Hence, in the cities at least, the whole juggling machinery was being gradually dragged into the light of day; so he issued an awe-inspiring edict, announcing that Pontus was full of atheists and Christians, who had the effrontery to utter the most shocking blasphemies against him, and enjoining the faithful to stone all such persons if they would continue to enjoy the propitious favour of the god. He also issued the following oracle on the subject of Epicurus, in answer to some one who asked him, 'What Epicurus was doing in Hades?'

'With leaden fetters bound, in mud he sits.'

Now, can you be surprised at the immense vogue of the oracle when you see how very sensible and intelligent were the questions addressed to it?

He now started on a war to the knife with Epicurus; and with good reason too, for who could be a more natural enemy to a juggling impostor, a lover of all trickery, and a hater of truth, than Epicurus, a man who, of all others, had most clearly discerned the nature of things, and who stood alone in his power of recognising the truth? The followers of Plato, and of Chrysippus, and of Pythagoras, lived on good terms and in perfect peace with Alexander and his friends; but Epicurus, 'The Irreconcilable,' as he called him, was rightly his bitter enemy, and held him and all his works up to ridicule as mere childish folly. Consequently, Alexander took a violent dislike to Amastris, which he hated more than all the cities of Pontus; for he knew that Lepidus and a number of others of the same way of thinking dwelt there, and he would never give an oracle to a man of that town. Once indeed he did attempt to give one to the

brother of a citizen there of senatorial rank; but he cut a very ridiculous figure in so doing, for he could neither think of anything neat to say himself, nor could he find any one to invent anything for him. The applicant had complained of a pain in his stomach, and Alexander wanted to prescribe a hog's foot, dressed with mallows, but all he could think of in the way of a verse was this—

'Pig's flesh and mallow in a holy tub
With cummin strew.'

As I mentioned before, he very often displayed his serpent to those who asked to see it, though not the whole of it, but only the tail and the body (for the head he had hidden from view beneath his garments). Now, however, wishing to make a still deeper impression on the multitude, he promised to let the god be heard speaking, and giving his oracles without the intervention of any interpreter. There was no difficulty in accomplishing this feat; all he had to do was to fasten a number of cranes' windpipes together, and, passing one end through the artificial human head, to get one of his acolytes, whom he placed outside, to call through the other. In this way the god gave the answer himself, the voice issuing from the mouth of the linen Asclepius. These oracles he called 'autophones'—they were not given to all comers indiscriminately, but reserved for grandees and rich people—in short, for those whose gifts warranted the favour. The oracle given to Severianus on the subject of his expedition to Armenia was one of these autophones; it encouraged him in his enterprise in the following words:—

'When Parthian hordes and all Armenia's hosts
Thy hurtling spear hath quelled, back shalt thou fare
To Rome's imperial city, and the waves
Of shining Tiber, while thy conquering bays
With rays of glory mingle on thy brow.'

But when the silly Gaul, deluded by the oracle, had invaded the country, with the result that he and all his army were cut to pieces by Orthryades, Alexander promptly erased that oracle from his records, and put this other in its place—

> 'Against Armenia lead not thou thy hosts,
> Lest from the long-robed foe some arrow, fraught
> With dismal fate, snatch thee from light and life.'

This, indeed, was one of the shrewdest of all his contrivances: after the event he used to substitute a fresh oracle in his books so as to rescue from disgrace any former ones which had unfortunately turned out amiss. Very often, when he had foretold the recovery of a sick person before the end of the illness was known, he had ready another oracle to the contrary effect to substitute on the person's death—

> 'Seek thou no medicine for thy sickness sore;
> Thy fate is sealed, nor help nor hope remains.'

Knowing that the oracles at Claros, Didyma, and Mallos were also in high repute at the time for the same sort of divination as his own, he secured their goodwill by sending numbers of his own votaries to them. To one he would say—

> 'To Claros hie thee now; my father's voice
> There shalt thou hear.'

To another—

> 'Unto the holy shrine of Branchidæ
> Do thou draw near, and hear the mystic voice.'

Or again—

> 'Repair to Mallos; let Amphilochus
> Unfold thy fate.'

All this took place within the territories of Ionia, and Cilicia, and Paphlagonia, and Galatia; but when the fame of the oracle reached Italy and the city of Rome itself, each man was more keen than his neighbour to question the oracle, and there was a general rivalry to be first, some going themselves, others sending deputies. In all cases the most powerful and noble were the most enthusiastic. Of these the first and foremost was Rutilianus; a man who, though in every other respect of the highest character, and one who had held many offices with distinction, was nevertheless very infirm of mind in all religious matters. There was nothing too wild for him to believe —he had but to see a stone anointed and adorned with garlands to fall on his knees before it in adoration, and stay there ever so long, praying to it and imploring its blessing. He, of course, as soon as he heard of the oracle, was ready to throw up the office he held, and fly to Abonotichus. He sent messengers in hot haste, one after the other, and they, being but uneducated domestics, were easily taken in, and came back full of the praises of the oracle, reporting what they had themselves seen, and other things besides, which they represented themselves to have seen and heard, all with embellishments which they thought likely to gain them their master's favour. All this fanned the flame of the unhappy old gentleman's superstition, and made his religious madness more acute than ever. As he was on terms of intimacy with all the most powerful men in Rome, and went the round of his friends, telling them all he had heard from his messengers, to which he, in his turn, did not fail to add his own embellishments, he filled the whole city with these ideas, and threw it into a state of perturbation, including the greater part of those attached to the

Emperor's court, who were greatly excited, and many of them set out to inquire of the oracle in person concerning their own affairs. These our friend received with great affability; and by hospitable attentions and valuable presents, he conciliated their goodwill, and despatched them to Rome, not only extolling the answers they had received, but full of the praises of the god, and ready to relate any number of lying wonders about the oracle and its divinity.

The next idea the scoundrel hit upon was really a very clever one, and not by any means that of any everyday thief. If, on opening the scrolls, he found anything in them of a treasonable nature or likely to be dangerous to the sender, he used to keep it back, and not return it; so that the recollection of what they had asked kept them completely in his power, and next thing to his slaves, for you may guess what sort of questions such rich and powerful persons might be expected to put. Consequently he gained no small profit from those who felt he had them in his net.

I should like now to tell you of some answers Rutilianus received. His first wife's son being of an age to require a tutor to supervise his studies, he consulted the oracle as to the most suitable person to appoint. The answer was—

'Pythagoras and the bard of brazen war.'

As the youth died a few days after, Alexander was rather nonplussed, and could find no answer to make to his critics, till the devout Rutilianus himself came to the rescue of the oracle, saying that this was exactly what the god had foretold, commanding him to select no living tutor for his son, but Pythagoras and Homer, who were both long dead, and in whose charge the youth now

probably was in Hades. So, how, my dear friend, can we blame Alexander, when those with whom he had to do were so fatuously silly? Again, when Rutilianus asked him whose body his soul had formerly inhabited, he answered—

> 'First wast thou Peleus' son; Menander next;
> And next who now thou art; in time to come,
> When fourscore and a hundred circling years
> Their course have run, a sunbeam shalt thou be.'

However, he died at seventy years of age of a melancholy madness, without waiting for the god to fulfil his promise. This particular answer, too, had been an autophone. Again, when he consulted him about marrying, the god answered very outspokenly—

> 'The child of Alexander and the Moon
> Take thou to wife,'

for he had long since spread abroad a story to the effect that a daughter whom he had was his child by the Moon, who, according to him, had fallen in love with him once as he lay asleep, as it was her habit to do with handsome youths. So the astute Rutilianus promptly sent for the damsel; and though a bridegroom of sixty years of age, he married her at once, offering whole hecatombs to gain the favour of his mother-in-law the Moon—in fact, he already looked upon himself as admitted to the company of the gods.

When Alexander had thus got a good hold of Italy, he still continued to aspire to greater things, and sent out his oracles throughout the whole Empire prophesying plagues, and conflagrations, and earthquakes, which he offered to avert; promising to render effectual assistance against anything of the sort. One particular oracle (which was

also an autophone) he scattered broadcast in every country during the great plague—

> 'Lo, unshorn Phœbus from this dwelling rolls
> Death's noisome cloud away,'

which verse was to be seen written up everywhere upon gate-posts, as a charm against the pestilence. But in most cases the event was unfortunate; for, by some curious chance, the very houses where this verse was written were those where most of the inmates died. Do not suppose that I mean to say that the verse was the cause of their death, only it happened to turn out so. It may be that the common people, putting confidence in the motto, neglected to take precaution, and lived more carelessly, thinking it needless to assist the sacred charm by any efforts of their own, seeing that they had on their side these blessed words, and the unshorn Phœbus to shoot at the pestilence with his golden arrows. Moreover, our mountebank had established his spies even in Rome itself; a chosen band of his accomplices who were to report to him the intentions of each man and tell him beforehand what questions he meant to ask, so that he could have his answers ready, even before the messengers came with the questions. This, then, was his method of procedure in Italy.

His next step was to institute certain sacred mysteries, and torchbearings, and priestly initiations, together with a festival which was always to last for three consecutive days. On the first day a proclamation was made after the fashion of those at Athens: 'If any godless person, or any Christian, or Epicurean, have come hither to pry into our mysteries, let him be expelled; but let the faithful believers in the god complete their propitious

rites.' Immediately the business of expulsion would begin: Alexander would start it himself, crying, 'Away with the Christians,' and then all the crowd cried, 'Away with the Epicureans.' Then were represented the travail of Leto, and the birth of Apollo, the nuptials of Coronis and the birth of Asclepius; and, on the second day, the epiphany of Glycon and the nativity of that god. The third day was given to the nuptials of Podalirius and the mother of Alexander: the day was called Dadis, or Torch-day, because on it torches were solemnly lighted. Last of all came the loves of Alexander and the Moon: he lay in the midst, as though wrapped in slumber, whilst the Moon came down from the roof, as from heaven, in the person of Rutilia, the young and beautiful wife of one of Cæsar's procurators, who, in actual fact, was by no means indifferent to Alexander, and was honoured by his affection in return. There, before the eyes of her unhappy husband she openly kissed and embraced him, and probably it was only the publicity of the occasion which restrained her from overstepping the bounds of decorum. After a little interval our prophet came in again, gorgeously attired in priestly robes, and in the midst of a breathless silence cried in a loud voice, 'Hail, Glycon!' and his followers, who, though they were only Paphlagonians wearing untanned shoes, and exhaling a horrid odour of pickles and garlic, were acting as Eumolpidæ and heralds of the mysteries, cried, 'Hail, Alexander,' in response. Moreover, whilst frisking about in the mystic torchlight dance, he contrived that his garments should frequently become displaced, so as to show to all that he possessed a thigh of gold; this, I suppose, he had managed by putting on a tight-fitting covering of gilded leather which glittered in the light of

the torches. This gave rise to much searching of heart on the part of a couple of wiseacres, who were much concerned to know whether the golden thigh indicated that his soul was that of Pythagoras himself, or another one of the same kind. They brought the question before Alexander, and Glycon the king solved the problem of the golden thigh in the following verses:—

'The soul of him once called Pythagoras
Doth wax and wane, by changing Fate's decree;
But of the mind Divine the prophet's soul
An offshoot is, by the All-Father sent
To help his sons at need, which back to him
One day will wing its flight, by lightning sped.'

Although he bade all men abstain from vice, as displeasing to the gods, he was very far from doing so himself. He carried his insolence towards the silly inhabitants to such a length that they allowed him to behave as he chose; in fact, a glance cast by the prophet upon a man's wife was a great and highly coveted favour in the husband's eyes, and if he should deign to kiss her, the man thought his fortune was made.

I should like to give you an account of a conversation between Glycon and a certain person, Sacerdos by name, whose native place was Tios, and whose brains were such as you may gather from the questions he asked. I read the dialogue in his own house in Tios, written up in letters of gold. 'Tell me,' said he, 'divine Glycon, who art thou?' 'I am Asclepius the Younger.' 'A different Asclepius, do you mean, not the one we knew before?' 'It is not lawful for thee to know.' 'How many years will you remain among us to give us oracles?' 'A thousand years and three.' 'And then whither will you go?' 'To Bactria, and the regions around; for it

is fitting that the barbarians also should share the blessing of my presence.' 'Well, then, how about the other oracles —the one at Didyma, for instance, and at Claros, and at Delphi—does your grandfather Apollo still preside over them, or are the oracles false which are now given there?' 'Seek not to know; for this too is unlawful.' 'Who shall I be in another life?' 'A camel first, then a horse, and then a wise man—a prophet not inferior even to Alexander.' Such were the answers Glycon gave to Sacerdos; but he finished up with a metrical deliverance, for he knew that Sacerdos was a friend of Lepidus:

> 'Beware of Lepidus; a hideous doom
> Dogs his unhallowed steps.'

For he greatly dreaded Epicurus, whom he looked on as the greatest rival to his art, because he taught a system wholly fatal to his trickery. In fact, one of the Epicureans, who had the courage to attack him in the presence of a large number of people, came very near paying for his temerity with his life. This man came, and called out in a loud voice, 'How is it, Alexander, that you persuaded So-and-So (naming a certain Paphlagonian) to accuse his slaves, before the Prefect of Galatia, of having murdered his son, who was being brought up in Alexandria, and got them sentenced to death; seeing that the young man is alive and well, and came back here after the death of the slaves, who had been given to the wild beasts through your advice?' The facts of the case were really as follows:—The young man had sailed up through Egypt till he came to Klysma; and finding a ship there, ready to sail for India, he was prevailed on to take passage upon it himself. As he stayed a long time in India, his unhappy servants thought

he must either have been drowned on the voyage up the Nile, or slain by pirates (who were very numerous there at that time), and came back to his father with the tidings of his disappearance. Next came the oracle and the condemnation of the slaves, and lastly the youth himself appeared upon the scene, with an account of his travels. This was the story to which the Epicurean was referring. Alexander was furious at this exposure; for the sting of the accusation lay in its perfect truth, and accordingly he ordered the bystanders to stone the man, on pain of themselves incurring the same curse, and being branded as Epicureans. They had begun to do so, when a certain Demostratus, a stranger from Pontus, threw his arms about the unhappy man, and so saved his life when he was all but stoned to death—as, indeed, he quite deserved to be—for what right had he to make himself singular by being in his right mind when everybody else was raving mad, and go out of his way to get the benefit of Paphlagonian folly? So that was the end of his interference.

When the names of the applicants to the oracle were called over (which was always the day before the answers were to be given), the crier used to ask, at each name, whether an answer was to be vouchsafed; and if Alexander's voice was heard from within saying, 'Away with him!' that man was never again received under any roof, nor would any share with him either fire or water; he had nothing for it but to wander from place to place, as impious, and godless, and an Epicurean—in which word was summed up all possible insult and abuse.

There was one very ridiculous thing that Alexander did: he got hold of a copy of the *Principal Tenets* of Epicurus—which, as you know, is the very finest of his compositions, and contains all the chief points of his

philosophy — and, taking it into the market-place, he burned it in a fire of fig-wood, as though he were burning the author himself. The ashes he threw into the sea, in obedience to an oracle he had pronounced which ran—

'Give the crazed greybeard's ravings to the flame.'

The wretch did not know how much good that book can do to those who read it—what peace and calmness and freedom of mind it gives by delivering the soul from terrors, and bugbears, and portents, empty hopes and useless longings, imparting reason and truth, and purifying the mind, not by torches and squills and rubbish of that sort, but by right reason and truth and freedom of speech. Here, again, is one of the most impudent of many shameless things this scoundrel did. As his pronouncements found their way easily enough into the palace and the imperial court, on account of the high esteem in which Rutilianus was held, he actually circulated an oracle during the most critical period of the war in Germany, when the divine Marcus was contending against the Quadi and the Marcomanni, in which he demanded that two lions should be thrown alive into the Ister along with a great quantity of spices and offerings. However, the oracle had better speak for itself—

'In cloud-fed Ister's swirling eddies cast
Of the Great Mother's ministers a pair,
Two tawny lions, creatures mountain-bred,
And spices rich, which on the perfumed breeze
Float over India's strand; so shall the tide
Of victory turn, and o'er the land shall shine
The light of lovely peace.'

When this had been done according to his directions, the first thing that happened was that the lions swam ashore into the enemy's territories, where the barbarians

promptly slew them with their staves, under the impression that they were some sort of strange dogs or wolves; next, that a great disaster overtook our arms, in which nearly twenty thousand of our soldiers perished, which was followed in its turn by the affair at Aquileia, when that city all but fell into the enemy's hands. When the event had turned out so unfortunately for his prophecy, he fell back on the stale device of the Delphic oracle, and coolly applied the oracle given to Crœsus to his own case, saying that the god had certainly foretold a victory, but had omitted to state whether it was to be on the side of the Romans, or of their enemies.

By this time such great numbers of people were in the habit of flocking to the oracle, that the city was seriously embarrassed by the multitudes, and necessaries could not be procured in sufficient quantities. Alexander now invented the system of 'night-oracles,' as he called them: he took the scrolls, saying that he would sleep upon them at night, and then deliver such answers as the god should send him in dreams; which answers were, for the most part, by no means plain or clear, but ambiguous and confused, especially in the case of those scrolls which he saw were sealed up with unusual care. Not daring to open these, he wrote anything that came into his head, and quite at random, for this he considered entirely befitting an oracle. There were interpreters appointed for the elucidation of these answers, who made no little profit by explaining and unravelling their obscurities, though they, in their turn, had to pay Alexander for the privilege of doing this, at the rate of one Attic talent each person. Sometimes when nobody had come or sent to ask him anything, and there was no votary there at all, he would deliver himself of some

oracular utterance, simply to puzzle the foolish creatures. One of these was the following:—

'Wouldst thou know whom thy perjured spouse doth hold
In shameful dalliance in thy father's halls?
Protogenes it is; thy slave, to whom
Thou trustest all. With him thy wife conspires
Against thy life; to hide their guilt they set
By thy bed's head, beneath the wall, a cup
Of deadly poison. Seek and thou shalt find:
Thy maid Calypso knows.'

Who that was not a perfect Democritus could fail to be disturbed by so accurate a statement of persons and places, and yet would not any one immediately despise the whole thing when he had once seen through the farce?

Very often, too, he gave oracles to barbarians who consulted him in their own language, such as Syriac or Celtic; though he found it by no means easy to discover people in his own neighbourhood who were of the same nationality as his questioners. For this reason he used to have a long interval between the handing in of the question and the giving of the answer, so that he might have time to open them and find interpreters of their meaning. Of this sort was an answer he gave to a Scythian—

'Morphi ebargulis chnenchikrank shall pass to the shades and quit the light.'

Again, when there was nobody there, nor did any person exist to whom it could be addressed, he gave the following oracle in prose:—

'Return whence thou camest; for he who sent thee has died this day by the hands of his neighbour Diocles, who set upon him the robbers Magnus, Celer, and Bubalus, who are now taken and put in fetters.'

Now I will tell you some he gave to myself: I asked him whether Alexander was bald, which question I sealed up very carefully and conspicuously. I got back the following oracle :—

'Malach Attis was different from Sardanapalus.'

Again I asked him the same question in two different scrolls, and under two different names: 'What was the birthplace of the poet Homer?' To one of these he wrote this answer—

'Do thou thy skin with cytmis smear,
And fiery charger's foam.'

The cause of this was that he had been misled by the boy I sent with the scroll; for when asked why he had come, he said it was to beg a remedy for a pain in his side. As for the other scroll, he had heard that the man who sent it was asking whether it was better to go by sea to Italy, or on foot, so he wrote on it—

'Trust not the sea; but make thy way by land.'

There were several other traps of the same sort which I laid for him. For instance, I wrote one single question and enclosed it in the ordinary way in a scroll, and then wrote on the outside that it contained eight questions from some one on whom I bestowed an imaginary name; and I sent it to him with the eight drachmae and some odd obols, which was the correct fee for eight questions. He was quite taken in by the fee and the note on the outside of the scroll, which contained but a single question, namely this, 'When will Alexander's impostures be exposed?' and sent me eight separate answers which had nothing to do with anything in heaven above or the

earth beneath, as the saying is, but were all the most utter and absolute nonsense. After a time, when he found out the tricks I had played him, and also that I had tried to dissuade Rutilianus from his marriage, and to shake his faith in the promises of the oracle, he took a violent dislike to me, as was, indeed, to be expected, and looked upon me as his bitterest enemy. Once when Rutilianus consulted him about me he said—

> 'In midnight orgies foul and lawless love,
> That man delights,'

and, in short, he hated me cordially, and I quite deserved it. When he heard of my arrival in his city, and that I was no other than his friend Lucian, he sent at once in the most polite and friendly manner to ask me to come and see him. I had a couple of soldiers with me—a spearman and a pikeman—whom my friend the governor of Cappadocia had given me as an escort to the coast. When I came into his presence I found him surrounded by a great number of attendants; however, as good luck would have it, I had brought the two soldiers with me. The prophet extended his right hand to me to kiss, as his custom was with everybody, whereupon I raised it to my mouth, as though intending to do so; but instead of a kiss, I gave him a bite, which very nearly disabled his hand altogether. Whereupon the bystanders seized upon me, and attempted to punish my sacrilege with blows; in fact, they were already much annoyed with me because I had addressed him as plain Alexander, without giving him his title of prophet. However, he interfered with a great show of magnanimity, and put a stop to their violence, saying that he would easily subdue my ferocity by showing me

the divine excellence of Glycon, who was able to turn the most intractable enemies into friends. Then, ordering them all to withdraw, he proceeded to expostulate with me, saying that he knew all about the advice I had given to Rutilianus, and asking me what possessed me to act in this way towards him, seeing that it was in his power so greatly to advance my interests through the influence of his father-in-law. I was glad enough to receive these advances with an air of cordiality, for I now saw clearly into what a dangerous position I had managed to get myself, so it did not take me long to become his very good friend, though my sudden conversion was the cause of no small amazement to the beholders.

Soon after this, when I proposed to take my departure by sea (there was no one with me at Abonotichus but Xenophon, for I had already sent my father and the rest of my family on to Amastris), he sent me a number of gifts and presents of all sorts, and offered to furnish me with a ship and crew for my voyage. I took for granted that all this was straightforward and honestly meant; but when we went half-way on our voyage, I noticed that the skipper was in tears, and disputing hotly with the crew, whence I began to fear that some danger was impending. It turned out that Alexander had given them orders to throw us both overboard; and if they had obeyed, he would certainly have remained master of the situation, as far as I was concerned. However, the skipper with tears and prayers prevailed on the crew not to do us any harm; saying to me that he had lived for sixty years an irreproachable and honourable life, and would not now at such an age, and when he had a wife and children, defile his hands with blood—all of which showed very clearly what instructions he had received from Alexander. So he set us ashore at

Ægialæ, of which Homer sings, and sailed away back again. There I found some travellers from the Bosphorus, envoys from King Eupator, who were going with the annual tribute to Bithynia. I told them of the dangers to which we had been exposed, and they kindly took us into their ship, so that finally I reached Amastris in safety after my narrow escape from destruction. I now prepared for war to the knife, and left no stone unturned to avenge myself on the scoundrel, whom I had heartily detested even before his attempt on my life, and held in utter abomination on account of the infamy of his character. I proposed to institute a public prosecution, and had plenty of people to back me up in it, especially the followers of Timocrates, the philosopher of Heraclea. But the then governor of Pontus and Bithynia put a stop to this plan; for he all but went down on his knees to entreat us not to carry out our intentions, for he said that it would be impossible to affront Rutilianus by punishing Alexander, though his crimes should be brought home to him in the clearest possible way. So, finding my path thus blocked, I was obliged to abandon my purpose; for it would have been mere folly to persist in it, seeing that the judge had thus made up his mind beforehand to the issue.

As another specimen of Alexander's impudence, what do you think of his asking the Emperor to change the name of Abonotichus to Ionopolis, and to have a new coinage struck with the head of Glycon on the one side and his own on the other, adorned with the wreaths of his grandfather Asclepius and the scimitar of his maternal ancestor Perseus? Though he had prophesied that he would live a hundred and fifty years, and then die by a flash of lightning, he did not live to be quite seventy, as was natural

in a son of Podalirius. He died in miserable fashion, through the mortification and putrefaction of his lower limbs; at which time, also, his baldness became apparent, for he was obliged to let the physicians treat his head for the pains he suffered, which they could not do without removing his wig.

Such a catastrophe to the solemn farce which Alexander had kept up so long might undoubtedly suggest the idea of some divine retribution, even though it was merely the work of chance. However, it was only right that his obsequies should be solemnised in a manner worthy of the life he had led; and funeral games were accordingly held by his principal accomplices and confederates, in which the prize was the succession to his oracle. The decision was referred to Rutilianus, who was asked to decide who was to succeed to his oracular powers and be adorned with the hierophantic garlands of the prophet. One of the candidates was a certain physician named Paulus, an old man who thus disgraced himself by conduct little befitting either his profession or his grey hairs. However, their umpire Rutilianus dismissed them all uncrowned; saying that even after death the prophetic office must remain the property of the sainted Alexander himself.

These few facts, my dear friend, I have selected from the long list of Alexander's enormities as a sample of the rest; partly to oblige you, who are my very dear friend, whom I greatly admire for your wisdom and love of truth, as well as for the gentleness and reasonableness and serenity of your life and the charm of your conversation; and partly also (and this I know will be more pleasing to you) in vindication of Epicurus—that man of holy and truly divine nature, who alone has apprehended the highest good, and, by pointing it out to man, has become the true liberator of

those who listen to his teaching. Moreover, I hope that this book may be of some service to those who read it; on the one hand by exposing delusions, and, on the other, by strengthening the reasonable convictions already held by sensible persons.

ZEUS THE TRAGEDIAN

HERMES. Say, Zeus, why, thus in anxious care absorbed,
Alone dost pace, thy visage sickled o'er
With the pale cast of thought? Ah, bid me share
Thy counsels, be partaker of thy griefs,
E'en a slave's babbling may bring help at need.

ATHENA. Father of gods, Cronion throned o'er Heaven,
To thee I kneel, the grey-eyed goddess dread,
The Trito-born; hear thou, nor hide thy grief.
What secret anguish, say, doth sting thy soul,
Whence these deep groans, and whence this pallor chill
Which on thy cheek doth feed?

ZEUS. No ill there is,
No suffering, no tragic woe, whose weight
The race of gods might not well pray to bear.

ATH. Direful the prelude heralding thy speech!

ZEUS. O thrice accursed sons of earth, and thou,
Prometheus! what ills hast on us brought!

ATH. What is it? Speak! thou speakest to thine own.

ZEUS. Crashing thunders, loudly hurtling, what shall now
your bolts avail?

HERA. Pray now, Zeus, do not be angry if I cannot rise to your tragic heights, and spout blank verse like Hermes and Athena. I really don't pretend to have all Euripides at my finger ends; so I am afraid I cannot catch your fine tragedy style. But, I suppose, you don't

imagine I am in the dark about the cause of your sorrow?

ZEUS. Nay, didst thou know, full sore were thy lament.

HERA. Well, I know what the main thing is well enough —some love-affair or other. But, I assure you, I am not going to break my heart about it—I am too well used to that sort of treatment from you. I suppose you are languishing for some new Danae, or Semele, that you have discovered somewhere, and trying to make up your mind whether it is a bull you are to turn into, or a satyr, or perhaps a shower of gold, to slip through the roof into the lap of your mistress. The symptoms are all present—groans and tears and pallid cheeks—oh, yes, clearly enough your disease is love.

ZEUS. How absurd you are! The idea of supposing I could be so upset about nonsense of that sort.

HERA. Well, if not love, what can make Sovereign Zeus unhappy?

ZEUS. I tell you, Hera, the position of the gods is most precarious; we are being weighed in the balance, and the turn of a single hair will decide whether we are to go on receiving offerings and worship from mankind, or to be henceforth utterly neglected, and held of no account.

HERA. Has the earth brought forth more giants, then, or have the Titans broken loose from fetters and guards, to take up arms against us again?

ZEUS. Be of good courage; from the realms below
No danger threatens Heaven.

HERA. Well, if it is nothing of that kind, I cannot see what else can happen so very dreadful that you must needs appear before us as some play-acting Polus or Aristodemus, instead of Zeus.

ZEUS. I will tell you what it is. Somehow or other, an argument arose yesterday between Timocles the Stoic and Damis the Epicurean on the subject of Providence; and they discussed the question before a large and distinguished audience (which was what annoyed me most). Damis flatly denied the existence of the gods, as well as their supervision and direction of events; while the excellent Timocles, on the other hand, undertook to defend our cause. Then a great crowd collected; so they did not bring the discussion to any conclusion, but separated, after agreeing to resume it later on. And now, everybody is on tip-toe, as it were, waiting impatiently to hear which of the two will produce the better arguments, and come off victorious. So you see the danger of the situation, and in what a precarious position we are. For our fate depends entirely on one man, and the point at issue amounts to this: Are we to be utterly neglected and looked on as mere empty names, as we shall be if Damis prevails, or to continue to be worshipped, as hitherto, through the victory of Timocles?

HERA. Upon my word, this really is dreadful!—there certainly was good cause for your heroics.

ZEUS. And yet you thought it was about some Danae or Antiope that I was so put out! But come now, Hermes, Hera, and Athena—all of you—what are we to do? You must take your share in devising a remedy.

HERM. Well, I think you should call a general council of the gods, and refer the question to them.

HERA. I entirely agree with Hermes.

ATH. I think quite otherwise, my dear father. My opinion is that we should avoid any disturbance in

Heaven, and not let it be seen that we are upset about this. We could quite well take steps on our own account to ensure the victory of Timocles, and the ignominious discomfiture of Damis.

HERM. Well but, Zeus, it never could be kept quiet, seeing that the contest of the philosophers took place in public; and it will only make you look arrogant and overbearing if you do not take the gods into your confidence on a matter that concerns us all alike.

ZEUS. Well then, summon them at once, and see that they all come. What you say really is quite true.

HERM. All gods are requested to assemble without delay; let none stay away. A matter of the greatest importance is to be considered.

ZEUS. Dear me, Hermes, what a very bald and prosaic proclamation—especially considering the importance of the subject in hand!

HERM. Why, what would you have?

ZEUS. What would I have? Why, I think your proclamation ought to be dignified with metre of some sort, and with high-sounding phrases, so as to attract the gods.

HERM. Very likely. But then, you see, Zeus, I have absolutely no talent for verse-making and that sort of thing, and I should spoil the proclamation by making my lines too long or too short, and they would only laugh at the clumsiness of my efforts. Why, I have seen even Apollo laughed at on account of some of his oracles, although he always obscures his meaning so much as to leave his hearers very little leisure for examining his versification.

ZEUS. Well then, you might bring a good deal of Homer into your proclamation. You remember, I suppose, how he calls us together?

HERM. Not very clearly—I can't repeat it fluently, I fear. But I will try—

> 'Let every god and goddess now draw near,
> Save ocean's self, let none abide afar;
> No river god, no mountain nymph refuse,
> But to the starry threshold of Jove's court
> Turn ye your steps—all ye whose lordly rites
> Whole hecatombs display, and ye, no less,
> Who hold a middle rank; and last, the host
> Of nameless spirits who on altars wait,
> To catch the ascending smoke.'

ZEUS. Well done, Hermes! that is a first-rate proclamation—they are coming in already. Now go and get them to take their seats in proper order of precedence, according to material and artistic merit—the golden ones in front, then the silver, then the ivory, and lastly the bronze and marble; and then, of course, in each class you must see that those that are made by Phidias, or Alcamenes, or Myron, or Euphranor, or other first-rate artists, must take precedence of the rest. As for these rubbishy and inartistic ones here, they must go into some corner and keep quiet—they are of no good, except to make a full house.

HERM. It shall be done: I'll see that they are properly seated. But there is one thing I had better know. What shall I do if one of them should be made of gold, and perhaps weigh many talents, and yet be of no artistic value—quite amateurish, it may be, and clumsy in style? Is he to sit in front of plain bronzes by Myron or Polyclitus, or simple marble from the chisel of Phidias or Alcamenes? Which am I to be guided by—material or art?

ZEUS. It ought to be art, of course; but still you had better let the golden one sit in front.

HERM. I understand; you wish me to classify them by riches, not by merit. So now, ye golden gods, come to the assembly. Dear me, Zeus, it looks as if all the front seats would be filled by the barbarians! For you see what the Greek gods are like—graceful and beautiful and of exquisite workmanship, but nearly all made of marble or bronze, or, if some of the most precious are of ivory, with a little gold glittering on them here and there, you see it is only a sort of outer skin or covering, for even these are wooden inside, and shelter whole colonies of mice within them. But as for Bendis and Anubis here, and Attis and Mithras and Lunus, who are sitting close beside them, they are solid gold, and tremendously heavy and valuable.

POSEIDON. How is this, Hermes? Are you going to put that dog-headed Egyptian in front of me? Do you not know who I am?

HERM. Certainly I do. But then, you see, my earth-shaker, Lysippus made you of bronze, and quite poor, because in his time the Corinthians had no gold, and gold is the most valuable metal. So you must just submit to be set on one side, and not take it amiss if a god with such a tremendous nose of pure gold is put before you.

APHRODITE. Well then, Hermes, you must find a place for me in the front rank somewhere, for I am all of gold.

HERM. Not so far as I can see, Aphrodite; if my eyes do not deceive me, you are carved from a piece of Pentelic marble, which Praxiteles chose to make into Aphrodite, and so you were given to the Cnidians.

APH. Well, I shall take Homer's word for it, rather than yours; he calls me golden everywhere in his poems.

HERM. Yes, but that same Homer calls Apollo golden too, and wealthy into the bargain; yet you see him there, sitting somewhere among the peasants, despoiled of his crown and of the very pegs of his lyre by thieves. So you may be thankful you don't have to sit among the peasants too.

COLOSSUS. Who will dare to take precedence of me, seeing that I am the sun-god himself, and so mighty of stature? If the Rhodians had not preferred superhuman size to valuable material, they might have made sixteen golden gods with the money I cost them, so that I ought, even in your reckoning, to rank higher than they. Besides, I am not only of vast stature, but a work of art of exquisite finish as well.

HERM. Really, Zeus, what am I to do? This question is a very hard one. If I look at the material, he is only bronze; but if I reckon the number of talents he weighs, he is more precious than the gods of the very richest class.

ZEUS. Now, what did he come here for, just to make us all look pygmies and upset the assembly? See here, my Rhodian friend, even though you be far more valuable than the golden persons present, how is it possible for you to take a front seat? If you do, every one else will have to get up, for the whole Pnyx would hardly be large enough to make a seat for you. The best thing you can do is to stand during the debate, and bend down your ear towards the assembly.

HERM. Here is another knotty point. These two here are both bronze, both have the same artistic value, for both are by Lysippus; they are of the same family too —both are sons of your own, Dionysus and Heracles. Which is to take precedence? You see, they are squabbling about it already.

ZEUS. We are only wasting time, Hermes, and the debate ought to have begun long ago. Let them sit down as they choose this time, and some other day we will hold a council on the subject, and then I shall be able to settle the order of precedence.

HERM. Good gracious! just hear what a tumult they are making! crying out 'Divide,' 'Divide,' as usual. We hear these same tiresome shouts every day: 'Where is the nectar?' 'The ambrosia is all done!' 'Where are the hecatombs?' 'Let the sacrifices be shared equally.'

ZEUS. Make them be quiet, Hermes. Tell them what they are summoned for, and make them stop this folly.

HERM. But they don't all understand Greek, and I have not half a dozen tongues in my head to make a proclamation that Scythians, and Persians, and Thracians, and Celts can all understand. I think the best way will be to make signs for silence, without saying anything.

ZEUS. Very good; do so then.

HERM. There—they are as dumb as philosophers, so now you had better address them. See, they are all looking at you, and waiting for you to begin.

ZEUS. Hermes, as you are my own son, I don't mind telling you how I feel. You know how self-possessed and eloquent I always am at public meetings?

HERM. Why, yes. I have often been quite frightened when you were speaking, especially that time when you threatened to let down the golden rope, and drag earth and seas from their foundations, and all the gods with them.

ZEUS. Well, but now, my son, I don't know how it is, whether it is the greatness of our present peril or the size of the assembly—for you see the crowds of gods

who are here—but, whatever the cause may be, my ideas are quite confused, and I feel quite tremulous and tongue-tied, and, strangest of all, I have completely forgotten the exordium I had prepared as an effective opening for my address.

HERM. You have spoilt the whole thing. They are uneasy at the silence, and fear you have some terrible calamity which you hesitate to announce.

ZEUS. Do you think, then, I had better begin with that exordium of Homer's?

HERM. What exordium?

ZEUS. 'Now every god and goddess, hear my voice.'

HERM. Nonsense; we have had quite enough of your ranting already. Had you not better stop talking poetry—it's so hackneyed, you know—and take some bits from the *Philippics* of Demosthenes, whichever you like, and string them together, with a few alterations of your own? That is the style of speaking which is the fashion now.

ZEUS. Excellent! What a capital short-cut to rhetoric, and what a good resource to fall back upon, when one is in difficulties.

HERM. Well, do begin, then.

ZEUS. I feel certain, gentlemen of Heaven, that a mighty treasure would seem less precious in your eyes than a knowledge of the reason why you have been summoned here. Seeing, then, that such is the case, I invite you to listen attentively to what I have to say. For though the present crisis, my fellow-gods, cries aloud upon us, even as with an audible voice, bidding us take the most vigorous steps to meet the impending danger, it seems to me that our attitude is one of the most profound indifference. I will now, therefore (for my Demosthenes

has given out), tell you exactly what it is which has so upset me, and why I have summoned you to this assembly.

You remember how, yesterday, Mnesitheus the shipowner gave a thankoffering for the safety of that ship of his which was nearly wrecked off Kaphereus, and how those of us whom he had invited went down to the Piræus for the feast? Well, after the libations, you all dispersed and went each his own way; but I went towards the city, for it was not yet late, and strolled about the Ceramicus in the evening, thinking of the stingy disposition of Mnesitheus, who could invite sixteen gods to a feast, and then give them only one cock—and that an old asthmatic one—and a few grains of incense, so mouldy that they went out as soon as they touched the coals, so that we never got a single whiff from them, though he promised whole hecatombs when his ship had got inside the reef, and was drifting towards the rocks. Thinking of all this, I went on towards the Painted Porch, and there I found quite a crowd of people collected, some under the colonnade, and others in the open space; while two individuals were sitting on the benches, in hot dispute, and making a tremendous noise. I saw at once what it would be—a pair of those philosophers engaged in an argument; so I took it into my head to stand by and listen to the discussion. I was at the moment wrapped closely in a dark cloud, so I took the form of one of their own stamp, and, growing a beard of the correct sort, I made altogether quite a fine figure of a philosopher. Next, I elbowed my way through the crowd—quite unrecognised by them, of course—and found that scoundrel Damis the Epicurean and the excellent Stoic Timocles engaged in arguing

together with all their might—in fact Timocles was bathed in sweat, and had fairly cracked his voice with shouting, while Damis kept on mocking him with his sneering laugh, and irritating him still further. It seemed that the whole dispute was about us gods: the accursed Damis declared that we take no care of mankind, nor concern ourselves with human events; in fact, he simply denied our existence altogether—for that was what his argument amounted to—and he found a good many who agreed with him. Timocles, on the other side, took up the cudgels vigorously on our behalf, and worked hard for us, doing everything he possibly could to belaud and demonstrate our providential direction of the world; showing in what order we keep it, and how we manage and direct everything in due and fitting course. He, too, had his supporters amongst the audience; but he had tired himself out completely with his vehemence, and had nearly lost his voice, so that the majority leaned to the side of Damis. Seeing, therefore, how precarious was the situation, I commanded night to enfold them, and break up the assembly. So they separated; but not until they had agreed to bring the discussion to a conclusion the next day. I accompanied the crowd as they went homewards, and listened to their remarks. From these I gathered that they nearly all approved of what Damis had said, and were quite of his opinion, though there were some who thought they should not decide between the combatants before the arguments had all been heard, but should suspend their judgment till they knew what Timocles would bring forward the next day. This, then, my fellow-gods, is what I have called you together for, and I think, if you consider it carefully, you will see that it is no trifle, in

view of the fact that we depend entirely on mankind for worship and reverence and glory. For, of course, if they once become persuaded either that we do not exist at all, or else that we take no thought for them, we shall get neither sacrifices nor offerings nor honour from the earth, and it will profit us very little to be enthroned in Heaven if we are to be held in the clutches of famine—deprived of festivals, and holidays, and sacrifices, and vigils, and processions. So I say that, in a matter of such importance, it behoves you all to try to think of some means of escape from our difficulties, and hit on some plan whereby we may ensure the victory of Timocles and the discomfiture of Damis. For my own part, I don't feel very confident that Timocles will be able to win, if he is left to himself and gets no assistance from us. So now, Hermes, make the regular proclamation, so that the gods may come forward and give us their advice.

HERM. Attention there! Silence! No disturbance, please. What god of full age desires to address the assembly? What! does nobody rise? Are you all struck dumb by the importance of what you have heard?

MOMUS.

May all of you to earth and water turn!

If I might be allowed to speak with perfect frankness, Zeus, there are several remarks which I should like to make.

ZEUS. Pray, Momus, speak without hesitation. I am sure your outspokenness will only be for the general good.

MOMUS. Well then, listen, gods; what I say will at least come from the bottom of my heart, as the saying is. For my own part, I have always expected that we should some day find ourselves in this very predicament, and

that a perfect crop of this kind of Sophists would spring up against us, with a daring which is caused by nothing in the world but our own behaviour. In the name of justice, I say, it is not fair to be angry with the Epicurean and his friends and followers for expressing these opinions about us. What else can you expect them to think, pray, when they see the disorder there is in the world, and how the honest men are neglected and allowed to languish in poverty and disease and slavery, while scoundrels of the worst and basest kind are held in the highest honour, rolling in wealth and ordering their betters about; when they see the most sacrilegious miscreants get off scot-free, and perfectly innocent persons impaled or beaten to death? It is reasonable enough that, perceiving all this, they should think we do not exist at all. What are they to think when they hear an oracle telling Crœsus that by crossing the Halys he will destroy a mighty empire, without adding anything to show whether the empire in question is his own or that of his enemy? Or again—

> O Salamis divine, thou shalt destroy
> The sons of women born!

when both Persians and Greeks, as I imagine, were the sons of women. Again, when they hear poets telling how we fall in love, and suffer wounds and chains and slavery, how we quarrel amongst ourselves, and have all kinds of disagreeables happening to us, and yet claim to be blissful and immortal—how can they but laugh at us and hold us in contempt? And yet we are in a great rage if some of them, who are human beings and not perfect asses, bring these things home to us and reject the notion of our foreknowledge and

ordering of events, whereas we ought to be only too thankful if any one still goes on sacrificing to us, seeing that we still continue the same deplorable behaviour. And now, Zeus, seeing that we are quite alone and no mortal is present (except Heracles and Dionysus and Ganymedes and Asclepius, who are adopted citizens of Heaven), answer me truly, whether you ever troubled yourself, even so far as to find out which among mankind are good and which are bad? You cannot say you ever did anything of the sort. Why, if it had not been for Theseus, who slew them by the way, when on his journey from Trœzen to Athens, Sciron and Pittyocamptes and Kerkyon and all the rest might have gone on revelling in the blood of wayfarers long enough before your providential care would have interfered with them. Or if Eurystheus, a fine old-fashioned character and endowed with much forethought, had not been moved by his benevolent interest in other people's affairs to set his servant, our energetic and industrious Heracles, to work, you, Zeus, would have troubled yourself little about the hydra, or the Stymphalian birds, or the Thracian horses, or the insolent outrages of the Centaurs. No; if the truth must be told, all we do is to sit and wait to see if any one is offering sacrifices or burnt offerings at the altars—everything else is allowed to take its own course, just as luck will have it. So we are suffering now, and shall suffer in the future, only our just deserts, when men gradually wake up to the knowledge that it does them no good whatever to offer sacrifices and send processions to us. You will soon see an Epicurus or a Metrodorus or a Damis laughing at us outright, and our supporters vanquished and put to silence by them. So that what you had better do is to put an end to these

scandals and mend your ways, for it is you who have brought things to this pass. As for Momus, he runs but little risk of losing his honours, for he never had too many, even in the palmy days when the rest of you still feasted plentifully on sacrifices.

ZEUS. Let him go on talking as much nonsense as he chooses, gods; he always was of a disagreeable and fault-finding disposition. Besides, as the great Demosthenes observes, fault-finding and railing and accusation are easy enough, and any one who likes can indulge in them, but the part of a wise counsellor is to find out how present ills are to be mended; and this I am sure you other gods will do, even though Momus hold his peace.

POSEIDON. My dwelling, as you all know, is, as a rule, beneath the waves, and the scene of my operations is the depths of the sea, where I do my best to save the lives of mariners by convoying ships and calming tempests. At the same time, I am by no means indifferent to what passes on land, and I certainly think that this Damis ought to be got rid of before the discussion can take place, either by means of a thunderbolt or in some other way, lest he get the best of the discussion —for I think, Zeus, you said he had a plausible tongue— and this will be a convincing proof that we do concern ourselves with those who say such things about us.

ZEUS. You must be joking, Poseidon, unless you have quite forgotten that these things are not in our hands at all, but that the Fates have spun the thread of every life beforehand, and ordained that one man is to die by lightning, another by the sword, another by fever or decline? Do you think that, if it had rested with me, those wretches who ran off with two locks of my hair

the other day—each weighing six minæ—would have escaped from Elis untouched by my bolts? Would you yourself have overlooked the theft of your trident from Oreus by that fisherman of Geræstus the other day? Besides, apart from this, we should seem to take the matter too greatly to heart, and to have done away with Damis, because we were afraid of his arguments, and did not dare to match Timocles against him. Should we not seem to have gained our cause only by default?

Pos. Well, I merely thought that would be a short and simple plan for ensuring victory.

Zeus. My dear Poseidon, one would think you were presenting us with a tunny-fish instead of an idea—so dense is your suggestion: it would be simple, indeed, to do away with your adversary beforehand, and let him die unconfuted, leaving the matter in dispute just where it was.

Pos. Well then, hit on some better idea yourselves, if mine are only fit to be cast aside with a witticism about tunnies.

Apollo. If the young and beardless may be permitted to join in the discussion, perhaps I might contribute a suggestion.

Momus. This affair, Apollo, is so important that we cannot afford to take age or youth into consideration, but every one must be allowed to express his views. It would be a nice thing, certainly, if, in a matter of life and death like this, we were to split straws about procedure. Besides, in any case, you are quite of an age to speak, for you have long ceased to be a youth, and are entered in the register of the twelve great gods—in fact you are next thing to a member of the council of Cronos. So pray spare us your airs of youthful bashfulness, and speak

your mind boldly, and never mind about having no beard—especially as your son Asclepius here has such an imposing one. Now is the time for you to give us a specimen of your wisdom, and to show us that it is not for nothing that you are always sitting on Mouut Helicon, philosophising with the Muses.

Ap. Well but, Momus, it is not your business to settle this, it rests with Zeus. If he will allow me, perhaps I may be able to say something which will not disgrace Helicon and the Muses.

Zeus. Yes, speak, my son—I bid you do so.

Ap. Our friend Timocles is an excellent and pious man, and thoroughly familiar with the ethics of the Stoics; so that he gives lessons to a number of young men and gets a great many fees in this way; and, indeed, in private, among his own pupils, he can discourse most convincingly. But when it comes to public speaking, he is shyness itself, and expresses himself in clumsy, and even barbarous, language. In this way he makes himself ridiculous in public assemblies, for he never speaks connectedly, but stutters and gets confused, especially when, though labouring under these disadvantages, he wishes to make a brilliant display of oratory. But, according to those who are most versed in the tenets of the Stoics, he is a man of amazing sharpness of intellect and quickness of perception, though in speaking he spoils it all by his feeble power of expression, and comes to grief through not being able to make his meaning clear. What he says is like a string of riddles, and then, when he is asked to explain himself, his explanation is more obscure than the original, so that people don't understand a word, and simply laugh at him. Now, in my opinion, one ought to speak clearly and devote one's

chief attention to making oneself intelligible to one's hearers.

MOMUS. You are very right, Apollo, to speak in praise of lucid expression; even though you can scarcely be said to act upon this principle yourself in giving oracles, for you speak in dark mysterious riddles and, as a rule, what you let fall is safe in its ambiguity, so that those who hear you require a second oracle to interpret the first. However, what is your advice under these circumstances? How do you propose to remedy the feebleness of Timocles's oratory?

AP. By giving him some advocate to speak for him, Momus, if we can find one—some one who has the knack of public speaking, and who will effectively present the arguments which Timocles will suggest to him.

MOMUS. Well, that certainly is a juvenile proposal, and does suggest the need of a tutor of some sort. Timocles is to have an interpreter beside him to tell the audience what he wants to say. Damis is to speak for himself in his own person; but Timocles by the mouth of an actor, into whose ear he is to whisper his ideas; and this mouthpiece is to cast them into effective rhetorical form, though, perhaps, he does not in the least understand what the philosopher wants him to say. Would that not make a fine joke for the audience? No, we must find some better idea than this. But, my clever friend, you profess to be a prophet, and certainly you have received fees enough for foretelling the future—I believe you once even got whole bricks of gold for it. Now, why do you not give us an opportune exhibition of your skill, and let us know which of the philosophers is to come off victor in the discussion? Of course, as you are a prophet, this must be known to you.

Ap. Really, Momus, how can you ask me to do such a thing, when I have not got my tripod here, nor my incense-fumes, nor my sacred spring?

Mom. There—you try to escape being put to the proof when one drives you into a corner.

Zeus. Yes, do speak, my dear son, and don't give the carping fellow the chance to abuse your oracles, and turn them into ridicule by saying you depend entirely on three-legged stools and holy water and incense, and that if these are taken from you your magic art goes with them.

Ap. Well, father, I should certainly prefer to do this at Delphi or Colophon, and with all my usual appliances. However, though stripped of all these and quite unprovided, I will try and foretell which of them is to gain the cause—only you must excuse me if my verses are a little rough.

Mom. Do so, Apollo; only pray remember what you said about clearness, so that we shall not need some mouthpiece or interpreter for you as well as for Timocles. This is no question of the cooking of lamb and tortoise in Lydia; you know well enough what is involved.

Zeus. Ah, what is this you are about to say, my son? Already I behold the dreadful signs which prelude the oracle, the changed colour, the wildly rolling eye, the hair rising on end, the corybantic movements—everything bespeaks divine possession—all is appalling and full of mystic dread.

Ap. Hark to the augury of Loxias,
Of deadly strife foretelling, and the wrath
Of loud-voiced champions armed with many a word.
Hither and thither rolls the croaking din
With doubtful issue, while the lofty stern

Of the thick plough-tail sinks beneath the shock.
But when the vulture in his talons hooked
Shall seize the locust, then the swarthy crows,
The harbingers of rain, shall caw their last;
Victory shall crown the mule, and the dull ass
His wind-swift foal assail.

ZEUS. Pray, Momus, what do you find to laugh at in this? Stop, you idiot, or you will choke yourself.

MOM. How can I possibly stop laughing, so clear and perspicuous was the oracle?

ZEUS. Well, then, if you find it so clear, perhaps you will explain it to us.

MOM. It is so clear that we need no Themistocles to interpret it. The oracle clearly says that Apollo here is an impostor, and that we are a set of jackasses and mules to put any faith in him, and have not got as much sense as so many locusts.

HERACLES. Well, father, though I am a citizen only, as it were, by adoption, still I propose to speak my mind without hesitation. When the discussion begins, if Timocles seems to be getting the best of it, let us allow them to go on discussing us as much as they like; but if he seems to be losing ground, I suggest that I should go and pull down the whole porch about Damis's ears, so that the scoundrel may stop insulting us.

ZEUS. Upon my word, Heracles, this would be a fine crude trick indeed! What a country bumpkin's idea, to go and destroy so many people for the sake of one scamp, and the beautiful porch with the pictures of Marathon and Miltiades and Cynegirus and all! Pray, how do you suppose the orators would get on when these were in ruins, deprived as they would be of their chief stock-in-trade? Besides, though no doubt you

could do that sort of thing when you were alive, I should think you ought to have learned since you became a god that the Fates alone have it in their hands now, and that we are quite powerless in the matter.

HER. Why, when I slew the lion and the hydra, was it the Fates who did it by my hand?

ZEUS. Certainly it was.

HER. So that now, if any one insults me, or robs my temple, or overthrows my image, I cannot destroy him unless the Fates have decreed it long ago?

ZEUS. No, you cannot.

HER. Well, then, Zeus, just you listen while I speak my mind. I am a rough fellow, and, as the saying is, I call a spade a spade. If that is our position, I shall bid a long farewell to divine honours and the smoke and blood of sacrifices, and betake myself to Hades, where the mere sight of me, though I have nothing but my bow, will terrify at least the shades of the monsters I have slain.

ZEUS. Well, well, as the saying is, the house is divided against itself. You may as well go over to Damis at once if you are going to suggest arguments to him in this way. But now, who is this coming here in such tremendous haste—a figure all of bronze, fine and correct of line, with hair arranged in the old-fashioned style? Surely, Hermes, this is your brother of the Agora, who stands close to the Painted Porch? for I see he is all over pitch, as though he had a cast of him taken every day by the statuaries. Why, my son, do you come running here in such a hurry? Have you some startling news from the earth?

HERMAGORAS. Yes, indeed, Zeus, prodigious news, and needing all your care a thousand times.

ZEUS. Tell us what it is; has some fresh trouble arisen without our knowledge?

HERMAG. Beneath the sculptor's hands as late I stood,
Smeared, back and breast, with pitch, made laughable
By the stiff corslet which their mimic art
Had set upon my form, to be the mould
For brazen figures new, behold, I saw
A hurrying crowd, and in their midst went two
Pale-faced, loud-clamouring in wordy war;
Damis it was and——

ZEUS. My dear Hermagoras, you may stop your verse-making. I know whom you mean perfectly well. But, tell me, have they begun the contest already?

HERMAG. Not yet; they had had a few preliminary skirmishes when I left, and had exchanged a few missiles from a distance in the shape of abuse.

ZEUS. What, then, is left to us gods to do but to stoop down and listen to them? Let the Hours draw back the bolt from the clouds, and throw open the gate of Heaven. Good gracious, what a crowd of people have come to the meeting! I don't feel the least sure of Timocles—see how he trembles and how confused he is—he will ruin us all to-day, for it is perfectly clear that he is no match for Damis. However, we will do all we can—we will pray for him:

'But soft within ourselves, lest Damis hear.'

TIMOCLES. What do you say, Damis, you sacrilegious wretch? No gods—no Providence watching over man?

DAMIS. None at all. But pray tell me this: What makes you think there are?

TIM. It is not for me to answer questions, you wretch, but to ask them.

DAM. No, you must answer.

ZEUS. Our man has decidedly the advantage so far; he is louder and more violent. Well done, Timocles, keep on abusing him roundly, for that is your strong point; he will stop your mouth and make you as dumb as a stock-fish if you argue with him.

TIM. No, by Athena, I won't be the first to answer.

DAM. As you will, Timocles, for so great an oath compels respect. But please don't be abusive.

TIM. Very good. So then, tell me, you accursed scoundrel, do you think the gods don't direct the affairs of men?

DAM. I am sure they do not.

TIM. What! no Providence to guide events?

DAM. None.

TIM. Everything depends on the unreasoning course of chance?

DAM. Certainly.

TIM. Gentlemen, can you listen to this, and refrain from stoning the blasphemer to death?

DAM. Why do you try to set the audience against me, Timocles? Pray, who are you, to get so angry on behalf of the gods who do not get angry themselves? At least they have done nothing to punish me, though they must have heard long ago what I say about them —that is, if they can hear at all.

TIM. They hear you, Damis, they hear you; and one day, be sure, their vengeance will fall upon you.

DAM. And, pray, when are they likely to have time to think of an insignificant person like me, when they have so much to attend to as you say they have, and are busy directing the multitudinous events in the world? This must be the reason why they have never punished you

for your perjuries and other crimes. However, I will not allow myself to follow your example, and use injurious language, contrary to our agreement. Still, I may just say that I cannot see what better proof they could have given of their providence than to miserably destroy a wretch like you. But no doubt they are far away, perhaps beyond the river of Ocean with the blameless Ethiopians. We know it is their custom to go there constantly in search of banquets, sometimes without an invitation too.

TIM. What possible answer can I make to such shameless effrontery, Damis?

DAM. Give me the answer I have been waiting for so long, and tell me why you believe in the providence of the gods.

TIM. In the first place, the orderly sequence of events persuades me of it: the sun which keeps ever in his course, and the moon likewise; the revolving seasons, and the plants and animals which come into being after their several kinds, and the beautiful adaptations by which it is possible to feed and think and move and walk, to practise trades like carpentry and shoemaking and everything else. Does not all this seem to you a proof of Divine Providence?

DAM. My good Timocles, you are begging the question; the very point we are discussing is, whether it is Providence which orders these things or not? I am quite ready to admit that the facts of the universe are as you have described them, but it by no means follows that I must needs believe they are the result of forethought on any one's part. For it would be quite possible to start from wholly different premises, and arrive at the same conclusion. You label necessity 'arrangement'; and

then, forsooth, you are annoyed if any one should enumerate all these facts with admiration, as you do yourself, but refuse to agree with you in regarding them as proofs of their having been severally ordered by some providential interference. No, as the man says in the comedy—

This is too silly: tell me something else.'

TIM. I do not see that any additional proof is required; however, I will give you one. Answer me this: Do you consider Homer the greatest of poets?

DAM. Certainly.

TIM. Well, then, I put faith in his statement as to the providence of the gods.

DAM. But, my good man, every one will agree with you that Homer was a good poet, but not that either he or any other poet is a good authority on a subject like this. Their object, as I understand it, is to charm their hearers; it is for this that they mould their tale into verse, and embellish it with fictitious incidents, and, in short, do all they can to make it attractive. However, I would gladly learn which passages of Homer they are which specially carried conviction to your mind. Was it the place where he says that the daughter, and brother, and wife of Zeus conspired together to put him in chains; and that if Thetis had not found out what was happening, and summoned Briareus to the rescue, our benefactor Zeus would have been taken from us, and put in fetters? Or how, to show his gratitude to Thetis for his deliverance, he sent a lying dream to deceive Agamemnon, and so caused the death of innumerable Achæans? You see, he could not, forsooth, have destroyed Agamemnon himself by one of his thunder-

bolts, without stooping to this deceit! Or did you feel more irresistibly drawn to believe when you heard how Diomedes wounded Aphrodite, and then Ares himself, at the bidding of Athena? and then how, shortly afterwards, all the immortals plunged into the battle pell-mell, gods and goddesses alike, and how Athena overcame Ares, doubtless owing to the exhaustion caused by the wound he had received from Diomedes, and how

> 'Maia's luck-bringing son, stout Hermes, stood
> Against fair Leto matched.'

Perhaps, again, you noticed the striking probability of the story about Artemis—how she, being of a quarrelsome disposition, was so much annoyed by the failure of Œneus to invite her to his banquet, that she sent a boar of prodigious and irresistible might to ravage his country? Was it by stories like this that Homer convinced you?

ZEUS. Alack, ye gods, hear how they shout, applauding Damis! As for our champion, he seems at his wits' end; he is terrified and trembling, and evidently just on the point of casting away his shield. Why, he is looking round already for some door of escape.

TIM. Then do you think Euripides, too, talks nonsense when he puts the gods on the stage, and exhibits them in the act of saving noble heroes, and crushing the impiety of such scoundrels as yourself?

DAM. But, Timocles, my most noble of philosophers, if the tragedians have convinced you by writing scenes like this, you must believe one of two things—either that Polus, Aristodemus, and Satyrus are actually gods, or else that their masks and buskins, their sweeping robes

and cloaks and flowing sleeves, their false paunches and padding, and all their other tragic properties, are gods, which, I think, would be truly ridiculous. Especially seeing that Euripides, when he speaks for himself, and not according to the exigencies of the piece, shows his own mind pretty freely; for instance, in such lines as these:—

> 'Dost thou behold the boundless ether's height,
> And earth beneath, wrapped in its soft embrace,
> See Zeus in this: this shall be God for thee.'

Or again—

> 'Zeus, whosoe'er Zeus be, for of him nought
> Beyond his name I know——'

and other passages in the same strain.

TIM. Then, we are to conclude that all peoples and nations are wrong in believing in the gods and holding festivals in their honour?

DAM. I am much obliged to you, Timocles, for reminding me of the religious beliefs held by the different nations of the earth; for they are the most obvious of all proofs of the uncertainty which involves the whole subject, seeing that the greatest possible confusion prevails among them, and the most conflicting views are held. The Scythians pay religious honours to a scimitar; the Thracians to Zamolxis, a runaway slave who came to them from Samos; the Phrygians to Mene; the Ethiopians to Day; the Cephalonians to Phales; the Assyrians to a Dove; the Persians to Fire; and the Egyptians to Water. Again, though water is worshipped by all Egyptians in common, they have some local cults as well; for instance, the Bull is a god to the Memphians; the Onion to the Pelusians; others, again, worship the Ibis or the

Crocodile; others the Dog-headed Ape, or the Cat, or the Monkey; the dwellers in some villages regard the right shoulder as divine, while their neighbours on the opposite bank adore the left; some, again, venerate one side of the head, others an earthen drinking-cup or a bowl. Don't you think all this rather laughable, my good Timocles?

MOM. Did I not tell you that he would drag all this into the light of day and turn it inside out?

ZEUS. Yes, you did, Momus, and you were perfectly right. If only we manage to tide over this present crisis, I will see to it that all this is put a stop to.

TIM. Well, but, you god-forsaken wretch, what about oracles, and intimations of future events? To what do you ascribe these, if not to the gods and their foreknowledge?

DAM. I think, my good friend, the subject of oracles is one which you had best avoid. Which, may I ask, would you most wish to be discussed? The one which the Pythian god gave to Crœsus of Lydia, which was ingeniously ambiguous and double-faced, like those busts of Hermes which are the same on whichever side you look at them? For what was he to understand by it? Was it his own empire he was to destroy by crossing the Halys, or that of Cyrus? And yet, the wretched Sardian had bought this precious riddle for no small sum.

MOM. There, now, you see he has touched on the very point I was most afraid of. Where is our fine lute-player now? Let him go down, and defend himself against these charges.

ZEUS. You but add to our miseries, Momus, by your ill-timed reproaches.

TIM. Impious Damis! don't you see that you are overthrowing the very thrones and altars of the gods?

DAM. No, Timocles, I have no desire to overthrow their altars; there is no particular harm in them, so long as they are loaded only with offerings and incense. Except, indeed, the altars of the Taurian Artemis; these I should certainly like to see razed to their very foundations, seeing the nature of the feasts which used to please the maid.

ZEUS. Whence has this resistless evil fallen upon us? This man spares not a single god amongst us, but gives free rein to his tongue, as though he were in an Eleusinian procession, and

'Blames all alike, guilty and guiltless too.'

MOM. Well, as for the guiltless, he won't find them in great numbers among us. Perhaps he will go on next to attack some of the very highest.

TIM. Have you never heard the thunder of Zeus, you godless infidel?

DAM. Of course I have heard plenty of thunder, Timocles; but as to its being the thunder of Zeus or not, you, no doubt, can best say, as, perhaps, you have come here from amongst the gods. But those who have come from Crete tell quite another tale: they say that a tomb is shown there with a tablet set over it, which shows that Zeus can hardly be thundering now, as he died long ago.

MOM. I knew all along that he would say that. But pray, Zeus, why have you turned so pale, and why are your teeth chattering for terror? You should pluck up your courage, and never mind a wretched little mortal like this.

ZEUS. How so, Momus? never mind him? Don't you see what a large audience he has, and how they are all taking sides with him against us, and how he is fairly leading them captive by the ears?

MOM. Well but, Zeus, you know you can always let down your golden rope, and

'Upheave them all, with earth and heaven as well.'

TIM. Tell me, you wretch, did you ever go on a voyage?

DAM. Very often.

TIM. Then was it the wind filling your sails, or the rowers, which carried your boat over the waves? Did not some one man hold the tiller and guide the ship into safety?

DAM. Of course.

TIM. Then the ship could not have made the voyage had she not been steered; yet you think the universe can pursue its course without guidance or direction?

ZEUS. Good, Timocles, an excellent analogy.

DAM. Well, but, Timocles favoured of Heaven, that skipper, you will observe, had made all necessary arrangements beforehand and given the proper instructions to the crew; there was nothing superfluous or unsuitable on board, only what was useful and necessary for the voyage. But as for this captain of yours and his comrades, who, you say, direct the great ship of the universe, they have no method or arrangement at all; on the contrary, you may very likely see the forestays fixed to the stern of the ship, and the sternsheets to the bow; sometimes the anchor is of gold, and the figure-head of lead, while the ship herself is neatly painted below the water-line, and left rough above. Amongst the crew themselves, you may often

notice an idle, unskilled, and cowardly fellow holding an important position, and another who is a skilled diver, a nimble climber, and, in short, a thoroughly competent seaman, set to bale out the bilge-water. So with the passengers: you may see a gaol-bird sitting down to meat with the captain, and having every attention paid to him; another who is, perhaps, a parricide or temple-robber, enjoying the best quarters in the ship; while many most respectable people are stowed away in the hold, and trampled under foot by their inferiors. Just think what a voyage Socrates, and Aristides, and Phocion had: they were kept on short rations, and had not room enough so much as to stretch their legs out on the bare planks beside the bilge-water, yet Callias and Midias and Sardanapalus were kept rolling in luxury, and spitting down on those beneath. Such is the state of matters on board this ship of yours, Timocles, and hence comes many a mishap. But if some one were in charge to see to and order all this, he would be able to distinguish between the worthless and those of good character, and would deal with all according to their deserts. He would give the best places to the best persons, setting them at his own side up above, and would leave the worthless ones below, while he chose the good as his companions and counsellors. Among the sailors, he would choose the one whom he saw most industrious and skilful, to be the head of one of the watches, or, perhaps, set him above all the rest, while the lazy and careless would come in for a taste of the cat at frequent intervals. So you see, my good friend, that this ship of your analogy is in much danger of capsizing through the incompetence of her commander.

MOM. The tide runs strong for Damis: he is sweeping on to victory under full sail.

ZEUS. Sure enough he is, Momus. As for Timocles, he cannot think of a single decent argument; but keeps pouring out a string of commonplaces that any one could overthrow.

TIM. Well, since you don't think the analogy of the ship a sound one, listen again, and I will drop my sheet-anchor, which you can never drag by any manner of device.

ZEUS. What ever is he going to say now?

TIM. Please see if this is a correct syllogism—

> If there be altars, there are also gods;
> There are altars;
> Therefore there are also gods.

What do you say to that, pray?

DAM. When I have had my laugh out, I will answer.

TIM. Well, I must say it does not look as if you ever would have it out. Perhaps you will tell me why what I say strikes you as so amusing?

DAM. Why, because you do not see that your anchor hangs by a slender thread, sheet-anchor though it be. So you think that by fastening the existence of gods to the existence of altars you can ride safely by means of the two, do you? Well, if you have nothing better to say than this, I think we had better be going.

TIM. So you are going, are you? Then you own yourself worsted?

DAM. Of course, Timocles, for you have fled to sanctuary at the altars, like one pursued by his foes. So now, by your sacred anchor, I swear upon these same altars

that I will never again dispute with you upon this subject.

TIM. You are making game of me, you grave-robber, you foul scoundrel, you gaol-bird, you scum of the earth. Why, do we not know who your father was, and what was your mother's character, and how you are a fratricide, and an adulterer, and everything else that is disgraceful, you shameless glutton? Don't try and make off till I have given you a sound thrashing; I will break your head with this potsherd, you blackguard.

ZEUS. See, gods, Damis is running away in fits of laughter, and Timocles is following him with torrents of abuse, for he can't bear that Damis should make merry at his expense. I do believe he is going to throw the potsherd at his head. However, what are we to do now?

HERM. I think Menander was right when he said—

'No harm is done thee, if thou own to none.'

Dear me, after all, it is nothing so very dreadful if a few men do go away with these ideas. There are plenty who think differently—the majority of the Greeks, and the whole mass of the barbarians.

ZEUS. Well, but, Hermes, I feel about Damis what Darius did about Zopyrus: I had rather have one such as he for an ally than gain a thousand Babylons.

THE ORATOR'S GUIDE

You ask me, my young friend, how you are to become an orator, and attain to the dignity which attaches to the high and honourable title of Sophist. Life, you say, is not worth living unless you can compass that power of eloquent speech which shall make you invincible and irresistible, admired and looked up to by all, while the whole Greek world is eager for the delight of hearing you. Your wish, my son, is to learn exactly what roads they may be which lead to this desirable end, and I, for my part, very willingly give you the benefit of my experience: it is, indeed, with the greatest pleasure that I bestow this, I may almost say, sacred gift upon a young man who, full of high aspirations, and not knowing how to realise them, comes to me, as you have done, to ask for it. Listen, then, to what I have to say, and be assured that, so far as it depends upon me, no great time need pass before you acquire the necessary theoretical knowledge and the power of giving it practical expression; provided always that you are willing to abide by my instructions, and industriously form yourself upon them, persevering with your journey until you arrive at its end. The object of your pursuit is no contemptible one, nor is it worthy of merely trifling exertion; on the contrary, it is one for which you may well labour and keep vigil, and undergo all and every hardship; as, indeed, you will clearly see if you consider how many

men have risen from nothing at all to renown and riches—nay, even to nobility—through eloquence alone. Do not be afraid, however, or suffer yourself to be daunted by the very magnificence of the prospect before you, as though the attainment of so great an end must needs involve innumerable hardships. I will lead you by no rough mountain path demanding such mighty exertions that you are likely to turn back, worn out by fatigue, before you have traversed the half of it; for, in that case, I should be no better than the ordinary guides who follow the usual road, long and steep and toilsome as it is—so much so, indeed, that most of those who start on it turn back in despair. No; the great, the special, advantage I bestow on you is this: I shall show you a way that is extremely pleasant and very short, a good carriage road and easily graded, so that you go with all pleasure and comfort through flowery meadows and leafy shades, with easy and leisurely steps, till you find yourself on the summit without any exertion, and take possession of it without fatigue. There you may recline at your ease and feast yourself, looking down the while upon those unlucky mortals who have gone by the other road, already out of breath, though still at the bottom of the ascent. You may watch them as they creep slowly along by difficult and slippery precipices, often rolling over on to their heads with many a wound from the jagged rocks, while you have long been sitting at the top, happy and crowned with success, having in a short space gained all the prizes of eloquence, and that almost, as it were, without having had to rouse yourself from your sleep.

Such is the greatness of the prospect before you: do not, I beg of you, distrust me because I promise to show you a road to it which is both easy and delightful. If

Hesiod, by merely plucking a few leaves from Mount Helicon, changed then and there from a simple shepherd into a full-blown poet, and under the inspiration of the Muses sang how in the beginning gods and heroes came to be, why, let me ask you, should it be impossible in a short space to attain to the orator's comparatively modest standard, if one can but find out which is the quickest way to do it? In illustration of this, let me tell you a story about a certain Sidonian merchant, whose proposal, excellent though it was, fell to the ground through the incredulity of the person to whom it was made, who, accordingly, failed to derive any benefit from it.

After the defeat of Darius at Arbela, Alexander had become master of all Persia, and it was, of course, necessary that swift couriers should be sent all over his dominions carrying the despatches which contained his commands. Now the journey between Persia and Egypt was an extremely long one, for it was necessary first to skirt the mountains, then to pass through Babylonia into Arabia, and after that there was a great desert to be crossed before Egypt could be reached; so that the journey was one of at least twenty long days' stages, even to the strongest and best equipped messenger. This was a source of anxiety to Alexander, for he had heard that there was an insurrection of some sort on foot among the Egyptians, and he was unable to send the necessary instructions to his satraps there without this long delay. It was then that the Sidonian merchant came and said, 'O King, I promise to show you a short way from Persia to Egypt. If any man shall cross these mountains, which he can do in three days, he will be in Egypt immediately.' And this was, indeed, the fact, but Alexander refused to believe it, and looked upon the

merchant as a mere impostor. It is, in fact, usually the case that if a promise seems too great for fulfilment, people refuse to put any faith in it; but I hope that with you it will be otherwise, for experience will prove to you that there is no reason why you should not become an orator before you have journeyed even as much as one whole day over the mountains between Persia and Egypt.

And now, before going further, I should like to paint you a word-picture, one which shall be after the fashion of the pictures of the famous Cebes, and set visibly before you each of the roads—for there are two of them—which lead to those heights of oratory for which you so greatly long. Imagine, then, a woman, fair and beautiful, seated on a lofty height, holding in her right hand the horn of Amalthea overflowing with all good things, whilst on her left stands the God of Wealth, all golden and charming to view. Beside her, too, stand Honour and Power, while plaudits and pretty compliments innumerable flutter over her like little loves, and gather from all sides in charming groups around her. I suppose you will have seen a picture of the Nile god reclining on some crocodile or hippopotamus, such as may be seen in great numbers in his waters, and those little figures disporting themselves all over him which the Egyptians call the cubits of the inundation? If so, you may picture oratory to yourself as surrounded in like fashion by her plaudits. So do you, her lover, approach, full of eagerness to gain the summit with all speed, that so you may wed her and become master of all she has—wealth and glory and plaudits and all, for all these fall to her bridegroom by right for his own.

When you come near to the mountain, you will, at first, be inclined to despair because of its steepness, and it will

seem to you, as Aornus did to the Macedonians, steep and sheer on all sides, defying almost the flight of birds to scale it, and not to be reduced save by the might of some Heracles or Dionysus. This will be your first impression; but presently you will observe two roads leading up to it, or, rather, one bridle track and one road. The former is narrow and thorny and rough, plainly demanding much labour and thirst and sweat. Hesiod, however, has already given such an excellent description of it that I need not add anything to what he says. The other is broad and flowery and well watered—in short, all that I have described it to be, for I need not waste time in repeating what I have already said, and so detain you when you might be already starting on your career. This much, however, I think I should say about the rough and steep path—that there are very few footsteps of former travellers to be seen in it, and these few of very ancient date. I went by it myself, fool that I was, and underwent all these hardships without the slightest necessity. I saw the other one was level and straightforward, just as it is now, but I only looked at it from a distance, and did not enter upon it, for I was young, and did not know what was good for me, but believed the famous saying of the poet that all blessings spring from toil. But this saying was very far from the truth; for I see numbers in the highest repute who have attained to it without toil or trouble, merely by their happy choice of ways and words.

Now when you come to the beginning of your journey I know you will be puzzled—in fact, you are in doubt already—which road to take. I will therefore tell you what you must do in order to get easily to the summit, and there enjoy all good fortune, and marry the lady, and be the observed of all observers. It is enough that I

myself should have been deceived and had to suffer hardship, without your having to undergo the like; for you all good things shall spring up without ploughing or sowing, just as though it were the golden age of Cronos. In the first place, then, I may tell you that a powerful and somewhat harsh-looking personage will at once present himself to you—a man of sturdy gait, whose tanned and weather-beaten features wear an alert and manly expression. He is the guide to the rough road I have been describing—a silly fanatic who will talk a deal of nonsense to you, and invite you to follow him, pointing out the footmarks of Demosthenes and Plato, and other famous persons; footprints mighty, indeed, and far exceeding the measure of our day, but now, for the most part, dim and indistinct through lapse of time. He will insist that you will attain to happiness, and become the lawful bridegroom of the fair lady on the summit, if you will but follow exactly in these footsteps. You will find, however, that doing this is rather like walking on a tight rope; for, if you make the slightest mistake, either placing your foot outside the mark, or inclining your weight to one side rather than the other, you will fall from the true road which leads you to the marriage. Then he will bid you form yourself on old-world models, and set before you examples of a style of oratory which is obsolete and difficult to imitate, like the technique of the archaic school in art, as you see it, for instance, in the statues of Hegesias, or those of the school of Critius and Nesiotes—tense and sinewy figures, rigid of pose and severe of line; he will inform you, moreover, that in order to acquire this style, toil and watchfulness, temperance and perseverance, are indispensably necessary, and that without these you need never hope to reach the end of your journey. But the

most vexatious thing of all is the length of time he demands for the journey; for he reckons it not by days or months, but by years, and even whole Olympiads, so that the mere sound of such an undertaking is like to affright you beforehand, and make you give up the whole thing in despair, bidding a long farewell to the joys you hoped for. Then, over and above all this, he looks for no small fee for involving you in toils like these; on the contrary, he will not guide you at all unless he pockets a good round sum in advance. Such, then, are his pretensions; for he is self-confident enough, though as obsolete and exploded as Cronos himself, and wants to give you dead men for models, and dig up a style of oratory long dead and buried, as if it were some grand and admirable thing. He imagines that the right people to imitate are the swordmaker's son, or that fellow whose father was some schoolmaster called Atrometus, and that, too, in time of peace, when we have neither a Philip to threaten, nor an Alexander to oppress us, and when, consequently, there is no possible use for anything of the sort. You see, he has no idea that a fine new road has been opened, which is short and easy, and leads directly to the abode of oratory. Do not you, however, allow yourself to be persuaded by him or pay any attention to what he says, lest he should get hold of you and be the death of you, or, at least, make you grow old before your time through all these toils. If you really are in love with Eloquence, and desire to gain her while still in your prime and likely to be loved by her in return, you must send that unkempt and superfluously virile personage about his business, and let him make the ascent his own way, and take as many others with him as he can manage to delude, while you leave him behind you, panting for breath and bathed in sweat.

Then, as you turn into the other road, you will meet a number of different persons, and amongst them one endowed with all wisdom and beauty. A graceful uncertainty marks his gait, his head droops to one side, his glance is full of feminine softness, and his voice of dulcet sweetness; he breathes perfumes, his finger-tips gently scratch his head as he adjusts his locks, scanty perhaps, but curled and hyacinthine; his whole appearance is dainty and luxurious, like some Sardanapalus or Cinyras, or the fascinating tragedian Agathon himself. I give you this detailed description so that you may recognise him, and not let so divine a presence, so dear to Aphrodite and the Graces, pass by you unobserved. But what folly am I talking! Even though your eyes were fast shut, if he were to approach you, and let fall some remark from his Hymettian lips, so that you could hear the melting tones which mark his speech, you would at once perceive that this was no creature of flesh and blood, like us who eat the fruits of the earth, but some celestial visitant, nurtured upon heavenly dew or the ambrosia of the gods. If, then, you approach him and commit yourself into his hands, you shall at once, without any toil or trouble, become an orator admired of all, and, as he expresses it, 'Sovereign in the realm of words shalt thou be made, borne swiftly onward in the triumphal car of speech.' For, of course, when he has taken you as his pupil, he will see that you at once become master of elementary points like that. But let him rather speak for himself—for it is absurd that I should be the mouthpiece of such an orator, seeing that I am an actor but ill qualified to sustain so great a part, and might well stumble, and in my fall drag down the hero whom I personate.

He will address you, then, somewhat after this fashion,

as he plays with his remaining locks, and smiles with that polished and gentle expression which is habitual to him; while his voice, so soft and delicate, suggests the tones of some fair one of the comic stage—some Malthace or Glycera, or perhaps Thais herself—for, of course, a masculine voice would have a distinctly boorish effect, and be quite unsuited to the refined and charming speaker. He will, then, in modest vein, speak somewhat thus:

'Did the Pythian god send you to me, friend, pointing me out as the prince of orators, even as of old he pointed out the prince of sages in response to Chærophon? If this be not so, however, and, led by the voice of Fame, you have come of your own accord, hearing how that all men, overwhelmed with admiration of my gifts, are singing my praises and bowing down in wonderment before me, soon shall you know to what wondrous manner of man you are come. Think not that in me you behold one whom you may speak of in the same breath with this or that mortal —nay, not though it be a Tityus, or an Otus, or an Ephialtes—you will soon see you have to do with one whose surpassing, more than human, greatness far excels all theirs. For my voice, you will find, is to theirs even as the trumpet is to the pipe, the cicada to the bee, or the full choir to the single voice.

'Now, since your desire is yourself to become an orator, and there is none who can help you so well as I, do you, my dearest pupil, lay all my precepts carefully to heart, imitate me in all things, and strictly observe all the rules which I shall lay down for your guidance. Advance at once; feel no hesitation or misgiving because you have not been initiated beforehand in the secrets of oratory, and undergone that preliminary training which, under other instructors, makes the way so toilsome to those who

are so foolish and deluded as to submit themselves to it. We have no need of anything of the kind; so enter, as the proverb has it, with unwashen feet, even though you cannot so much as write your own name, the true orator is above and beyond all such things as this. In the first place, I will tell you what supplies you must bring with you, and what provisions you must take, so as most quickly to reach your journey's end. Then, as you proceed on your way, I will let you have some specimens of my skill, and also give you advice on various points, so that before sundown I will turn you out as an orator excelling all others even as I do myself—I who am, without dispute, the head and front, the beginning and the middle, and the end of all oratorical perfection.

'First, then, you must bring with you a supply of ignorance —this is the first and greatest requirement—then you must have plenty of assurance, together with impudence and shamelessness. Anything in the way of honour, and fairness, or moderation, or modesty, you had best leave at home—they are quite useless, and, in fact, actually a hindrance to our undertaking. You must, however, try and bring the loudest possible voice and an impudent bawl, with a gait and manner like my own. These few things are absolutely necessary, and sometimes they are sufficient by themselves. But, in addition to this, I advise you to let your dress be white, embroidered with flowers and of Tarentine material, so as to allow the limbs to be seen through it; your shoes, too, should be of open work, in the Attic style, such as women wear, or else you should have smart Sicyonian slippers, conspicuous by their white felt. Besides this, you must be followed by a number of attendants, and never be seen without a book. These things you must yourself provide; the rest you will pick up as we go along,

by watching and listening to me. I shall now run through the rules by observing which you will induce the fair lady Oratory to recognise and receive you, and not turn her back on you, nor dismiss you with contempt, like some uninitiated person who should pry into forbidden mysteries.

'So you see that what you have to attend to is, first and foremost, your personal appearance and the cut of your clothes. In the next place, you must scrape up some fifteen or twenty little Attic words and phrases from somewhere, and, when you have thoroughly mastered them, you must keep them always handy at the tip of your tongue, and sprinkle them as a sort of seasoning over all your speeches. Never mind about the rest of your vocabulary, even though it should be quite unlike these elegant expressions, and altogether incompatible and out of keeping with them. Only let your purple dye be of the finest and brightest, and never trouble yourself though your cloak itself be of coarse goats' hair. Next, you must get up some obscure and outlandish expressions, such as may have been used, perhaps, a few times by ancient writers; and when you have got a store of these, you must keep them ready to throw at the head of every one you talk to. In this way you will gain the respect of the multitude, and they will think you something wonderful, and of a learning altogether over their heads, if you but call familiar things by unfamiliar names. Moreover, you may sometimes produce a good effect by coining new and strange expressions of your own, and if, in so doing, you fall into some solecism or barbarism, your one unfailing remedy is impudence; you must be ready with the name of some poet or historian —whether such a person ever existed or not—who was a writer of the most polished style, and has stamped the expression with his approval. Then, again, the works of

the ancient authors are no reading for you; neither the trifler Isocrates, nor Demosthenes, devoid as he is of all the graces of style, nor the terribly frigid Plato. It is the orators of quite recent times whom you must study—their published orations, and those rhetorical exercises which are known as declamations; these will furnish you with a plentiful stock, from which you can draw on occasion as from a storehouse. If you have to make a speech upon some subject or theme which your audience have selected for discussion, however difficult it may be, you must pronounce it quite easy and trifling, and make light of it altogether, as though the dissertation proposed were mere child's play to you. As soon as the subject is decided on, make no delay, but plunge into it at once, saying whatever comes first to the tip of your tongue, without any attention to such trifles as the arrangement of your discourse, and putting the first point first, and the second after it, and then the third and so forth; but, whatever occurs to you, out with it at once, and, if it so happens, clap the greaves on your head, and the helmet on your ankle. Only, whatever you do, drive on, rattle away, never be silent a moment. Again, if you are speaking about some ruffian or adulterer at Athens, remember to touch upon the procedure customary in India or Media in such cases, and, above all, never forget to drag in Marathon and Cynegirus, for nothing can be done without these. In your speeches let the Persian foe be ever sailing through Mount Athos, and treading the Hellespont under foot, while his darts perpetually darken the sun, let Xerxes be ever in ignominious flight, and Leonidas in glorious fray, keep the letters of Orthryades always in evidence, and let Salamis and Artemisium and Platæa be much and often on your lips. Besides all this, let those charming little Attic flowers of

speech of which I spoke before bloom all over your discourse, whether they are in place or not, for they have a pretty effect even when scattered about quite at random. Again, if you think you see an opportunity for singing, break forth at once into song, and let your oration flow on in melody; but should your subject refuse to lend itself to music, see to it that the melodious intonation of your voice, as you make your appeal to the jury, shall supply the deficiency. Then you must frequently sigh, Alas! alas! and slap your thigh, and shout, and clear your throat, and walk to and fro with a stage strut. If the audience do not applaud you, you must lose your temper and abuse them; and if they stand up for very shame, and are on the point of going out, you must order them to sit down, and, in short, show yourself a regular tyrant. If you would have them duly admire your fine flow of words, you must begin your discourse with the siege of Troy, or you may, even, if you like, go back to the marriage of Deucalion and Pyrrha, and bring yourself gradually down to the present day and the subject in hand. You see, those of your hearers who understand what you are talking about will be very few; and they, as a rule, will keep silent out of good-nature, and, even if they do not, any objection they may raise will be ascribed to envy, while the great majority, struck dumb by your grand clothes, your loud voice, your strut, your singing, your Attic shoes and Attic turns of phrase, and observing how hot and breathless you are, will never think of suspecting that you are not a champion orator—especially as this same rapidity is in itself a sufficient excuse for any shortcomings in the eyes of the many, as well as a source of astonishment and admiration. So, be sure never to write your speeches, or make any preparation beforehand, for this would tell heavily against

you. Let your friends be always ready with their applause, for this is the return they can make you for all the dinners you have treated them to; and if they see you on the point of coming to grief, they should pretend to interrupt you in their enthusiasm, and give you an opportunity to think of something to say, during the pause occasioned by the compliments and applause. Also, be sure to have a choir of your own to accompany you with singing.

So much then for your behaviour on the platform. When you have finished, let your friends form a bodyguard about you to escort you home, whilst you yourself, closely wrapped up, continue discoursing about your late oration. If you meet anybody, you must advertise yourself loudly, and bore him with your own praises: "What was the Pæanian orator to me," you must exclaim, "have I my rival among the ancients?" and so forth.

'I had almost forgotten to mention a point which is most important and necessary, if you would attain to renown. I mean that you must treat all other speakers with contempt. If any one makes a good speech, you must say it is not original, but pilfered from somebody else; if he has been only moderately successful, you must declare the whole to have been utterly bad. You must always come in after the rest of the audience are seated; for in this way you will keep yourself in evidence. Then, while other people are all silent, you should burst into some extraordinary panegyric on the speaker, so as to divert everybody's attention from him to yourself, and make yourself a general nuisance, until all present are so disgusted with the vulgar affectation of your language, that they stop their ears. Then you must be careful not to applaud too often, for this would be to make yourself cheap, and do not rise from your seat more

than once, or twice at the very most. Keep smiling quietly to yourself, and let it be evident that you do not admire what is said, for to those who listen with spiteful ears the occasions of faultfinding are never far to seek. In everything you must remember that confidence is the great thing; you must always be impudent and unabashed, with a lie ever ready to hand, and an oath at the tip of your tongue. You must be full of envy, hatred, and malice, and have a good stock of plausible slanders, for this will soon raise you to honour, and make you quite a celebrated personage.

'Such, then, must you be in public life. In private you may indulge as much as you choose in dicing, drinking, and debauchery, or, even if you do not, you may boast to everybody of doing so, and exhibit your love-letters all round; for you must try and be as great an exquisite as possible, and make out that you are much admired by the ladies. This will redound to your credit as an orator, for the many will think it is owing to your eloquence that your fame has penetrated even to the women's apartments.

'So now, my son, if you thoroughly master all these precepts—and you certainly can do so, seeing that there is nothing hard about them—I can confidently predict that you will soon become an orator of surpassing excellence and equal to myself. As for the manifold good things which oratory will subsequently bestow on you, it is unnecessary for me to call your attention to them. Look at me, my father was a nobody—not even a freeman, for he served as a slave in Egypt—my mother was a seamstress in some slum, and I myself, though considered a smart boy, at first gained no more than a bare living from a wretched and miserly master. Certainly,

if it be not boastful to say so, I was provided with the equipment I have just been recommending to you—impudence, ignorance, and shamelessness. So first I cast off the name of Pothinus, and called myself after the sons of Zeus and Leda, and next I entered the household of an old woman, who at first kept me in luxury, for I pretended to fall in love with her, though she was seventy years of age, and had but four teeth, and these false. However, owing to my poverty, I submitted patiently to the trial; and though she had one foot in the grave, her frosty kisses were made sweet to me by hunger. I was within an ace of falling heir to all her possessions; but my prospects were spoiled by a wretch of a servant, who let her know that I had bought some poison for her benefit. So I was turned out of doors neck and crop, but even then I did not starve; on the contrary, I betook myself to oratory, and began to appear in the law-courts, where I obtain clients by hoodwinking fools and undertaking to obtain a verdict for them. I am usually defeated, it is true, but I hang up green palms and wreaths on my door, all the same, for they are useful as a bait for my unhappy victims. I am hated by everybody, and notorious for the infamy of my character and the even greater infamy of my speeches, and pointed out on all sides as the most finished of rascals, and this, it seems to me, is no small achievement.

'These, then, are the precepts which I commend to your observance, as those which, I assure you, I myself put in practice long ago with the happiest possible results.'

With these words your lofty preceptor will cease his address. If you obey his directions, you may rest assured that all you longed for at the outset will soon be yours;

and if you form yourself on his precepts, you are certain to obtain power in the law-courts and popularity among the multitude, to be beloved by all, and to wed, not an absurd old woman like your guide and teacher, but the fair lady Eloquence herself, so that, borne along in that winged chariot of which Plato tells, you may use the language he applies to Zeus more suitably of yourself. But I, poor-spirited and timid as I am, would fain get out of your way, and cease to pay court to Eloquence, for I can bring no gift to her like yours—nay, rather, I have ceased already. So may you be proclaimed victor without the dust and heat of the race, and be admired of all. Only remember this, that you have reached the goal before me, not because you ran faster, but because you took the easiest and most level way.

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